THE UNKNOWN FRIENDS

A Civil War Romance

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY

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THE UNKNOWN FRIENDS

A Civil War Romance

LETTERS OF MY FATHER

AND MY MOTHER

COMPILED BY

CHARLOTTE INGERSOLL MORSE

A. KROCH & SON: PUBLISHERS

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1948

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FOREWORD

THE CONTENTS of this book will I hope give the same pleasure to my children which they have given to me, and it is only necessary for me to preface the little volume with a few explanatory notes.

As a young girl I remember hearing my mother speak of her Civil War romance with my father and of certain letters which she had treasured during the years. After my father's death, which occurred on New Year's Day 1908, mother again referred to the letters and said that she wished me to have them after her death.

We had the joy of having her with us alert in mind and body until just before her ninetieth birthday. It was not until a few years later that the letters were discovered in an old japanned box among her effects.

They have been printed exactly as written with no attempt at editing, as it is my feeling that any changes on my part would only serve to lessen their worth.

As will be readily observed in reading the letters, there are few of my mother's letters extant and the first three are signed with her sister's name. She makes her own explanation of this. As my father was a cavalry scout it is easy to understand that even the smallest impedimenta were impossible and it is only remarkable that mother's first four letters were

preserved. Two later letters also remain intact in the correspondence.

Although over eighty-five years have passed since the first letter was written, they might have been written yesterday, and I believe I am right when I remark that I doubt if our last great conflicts have produced letters more alive or full of interest.

Charlotte Ingersoll Morse

April 1948

THE UNKNOWN FRIENDS

★ 9 ★

CAMP ILLINOIS, WASHINGTON, D. C.

DECEMBER 8th, 1861

FRIEND SARAH:

Now do not endeavor to guess who it is that addresses you as friend. Instead of wearying your brain with fruitless conjectures, just accept the title, and be specially thankful that you are capable of thus attracting towards yourself the friendship of a distant and personally unknown person. I have faith that you will so receive it, — not faith of the size of the mustard seed, but that faith which readily devours green cheese moon stories. Faith like a sponge, — believe anything. Not the least perceptible idea has ever found lodgment in my brain that you have ever even heard my name. And "what's in a name?" Shakespeare might truthfully have written that a rose would smell just as sweet without any name at all. What if my name should chance to be John Smith, am I any the less worthy a cordial recognition? — Of course, before this time the curiosity natural to all of your kind has prompted you to glance at my

signature, therefore I have finished my say as far as "name" goes.

My good friend Sergeant George Warner was writing a letter this evening. The temptation to follow his example was irresistible. My fingers fairly "ached" for the familiar feeling of a pen. But, unfortunately, after a long time spent in thought, I was unable to think of any one I knew that I could write to. (You may believe as much of the latter part of the sentence as you please.) And I asked George to tell me who to write to. Of course you are proud of the selection. It would be a "natural onpossumbilly" to be otherwise. Or perhaps you are one of those "exceptions" that one hears so much about these days, that scorn the regard of us "brutes," and sneer at those more womanly than themselves. I trust not, however — for if I did trust, I am fearful I should have many bad debts.

Washington is a nice place! — "so say we all of us." A great many people here at present, including Congressmen. I have noticed one peculiarity about the dwellings in this city, not generally observed in other cities. The main entrance to a house is in the second story, a flight of stairs leading up to it. Asking the reason for it, I was informed that during the sessions of the National Legislature such a precaution was necessary to keep "elevated" statesmen out of the house. Whether my informant used the word "elevated" for "drunken" I cannot decide. In either case it was a slanderous remark. As I said, Washington is a "nice" place. But it don't amount to anything! George and I after mature deliberation and discussion, have so set it down. Let it

be recorded. I have not been in the city but once, and that was on the Sabbath!

The rumor is that Company G, including the rest of the Illinois Cavalry, is going across the Potomac next week. That we are going to make our beds on the soil wherein sleeps peacefully He who gave tranquility and security and union to the Colonies years ago. I think it a fitting tribute to him that the principles for which he risked all to establish, should be battled for again over his remains. Would it were possible that he might once more live upon earth! — And if he could there would be some who would say he was old-fashioned!

Miss Rhinewaldt? I have no excuse to offer in writing to you, except this: To while away an evening, and to ward off an attack of ennui, I have ventured to address a letter to my friend's friend. We are the modern reproduction of the ancient Damon and Pythias — George and I. I claim his friends as mine, and he mine as his. If Propriety has been at all outraged, set it down against Uncle Sam — he needn't have called all his nephews away from home!

The whiteness of this paper has been somewhat soiled by my fingers (soap is scarce "in the army") trembling from the fit of trepidation which seized them when I thought of your indignation when this is received. One soon learns to forget etiquette and the customs of polite society "in the army" — or at least so much of them, as place an obstacle in the way of innocent pastime and pleasant communion with — any one. If I have overstepped the bounds of prudence, you may

write and give me the weight of your displeasure, if not, you may so inform me, and the information will be "thankfully received and liberally rewarded!"

George wishes to be remembered and "more too."

Respectfully yours,

CHALMERS INGERSOLL.

Chas. Magnus, 12 Frankfort St. N.Y.

Camp Illinois, Washington, D.C.,
Dec 8th 1861.

Friend Sarah— You do not know whom to guess who it is that addresses you as friend. Instead of wearying your brain with fruitless conjectures, just accept the title; and be specially thankful that you are capable of thus attracting towards yourself the friendship of a distant and personally unknown person. I have faith that you will so receive it—not faith of the size of the grain of mustard seed, but that faith which readily discovers green cheese moonstones. Faith like a sponge,—believe anything. Not the least perceptible idea has ever found lodgment in my brain that you have ever even heard my name, And "what's in a name?" Shakespeare might truthfully have written that a rose would smell just as sweet without any name at all. What if my name should chance to be John Smith, am I any the un-

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his remains. Would it were possible that he might once more live upon earth for a time. If he could then would he come [illegible] would say he was old *fashioned*!

Miss Rhinevault, I have no excuse to offer in writing to you, except this: to while away one evening, and to stand off an attack of ennui: I have ventured to address a letter to my friend's friend. We are the modern reproduction of the ancient Damon and Pythias. George and I. I claim his friend as mine, and he mine as his. If "*Cracker*" has ever at all outraged, set it down against Uncle Sam, - he needn't have taken us orphans away from home!

The whiteness of this paper has been somewhat soiled by my fingering (sent to general "in the army") [illegible] from the result of the exploration which [illegible] I thought of your application above. This is received. One soon *learns* to *forget* etiquette and the customs of polite society "in the army" - or at least so much of them as place an obstacle in the way of innocent, genuine and pleasant communication with strangers. If I have overstepped the bounds of prudence you may write and give me the benefit of your displeasure, if not, you can so inform me, and the information will be thankfully received and liberally rewarded!"

George wishes to be remembered [illegible] Yours *Chalmers* *Ingersoll*.

★ 13 ★

WMS. VILLE

DECEMBER 15th, 1861

MY UNKNOWN FRIEND:

Verily hath it been said that "Expectation makes the blessing sweeter" and this as applied to the reception of a kind letter is, I think doubly so. Yet an *unexpected* letter, although it be received from one with whom we are entirely unacquainted, if it be filled with that which never fails to interest, as the one before me bearing your signature, will *almost* invariably impart pleasure to her to whom it is addressed. I say *almost,* since I am aware that there do exist those "exceptions" to which you refer in your letter, and I am not particularly happy in saying that they are *not* very few in this part of the mundane sphere. But the reason of this plentitude, I suppose must be attributed to the scarcity (in this section) of those "persons" who are *capable* of regarding and appreciating the more gentler sex according to their real worth.

It is unnecessary for me to acquaint you of my surprise at receiving your letter, but let me assure you, I felt anything but indignant in perusing it, and rather—"proud of the selection." Now do not infer that

I am so philanthropic that I would receive offered friendship from any one, for the deceitfulness of mankind is constantly before me in the most vivid colors, and as a "natural consequence" I have become quite distrustful. But as you acknowledge yourself to be *my* friend's friend, and since I *know* that George possesses a good and honest heart, I kindly receive your letter and gladly accept your friendship.

It affords me much pleasure in knowing, that you are, like very many noble souls engaged in assisting Uncle Sam in his "Family quarrel," and that Heaven may shower her choicest blessings upon all those who are contending *against* that portion of his "family" who have succeeded in destroying the peace and harmony that were purchased by the life's-blood of our forefathers, years ago, and that tranquility may again be restored to our once-delightful land, is my warmest desire and earnest prayer, and with the untiring exertion and unceasing energy of those who have enlisted against that which threatened and destroyed the permanence of our Union we can hope that a glorious victory may be achieved, for Virgil has very truthfully written Labor omnia vincit. But I find

> " 'Tis now the hour, when Night has driven
> Her car half round yon sable heaven"

and I will "finish my say," by reminding you that *this* is to be "thankfully received and liberally rewarded" [and of course you will allow me a choice in the reward] *by an immediate reply* if you will allow me to judge.

Respectfully yours,

Sarah E. Rinewalt

★ 15 ★

CAMP CALIFORNIA, FAIRFAX CO., VA.

DECEMBER 28th, 1861

FRIEND SARAH:

Your very agreeable and pleasant note was received a day or two since. It was with feelings of more than curiosity that I tore the envelope. — I was a little anxious to ascertain whether my unusual proceeding had received a decided rebuke, or whether you had overlooked the impropriety, (if there was any) and accepted the proffer of friendship. My "universal agitation" was quieted as I read, and before I finished its perusal, you had been added to the list of persons who form the magic circle of friendship. And I thank you that you regarded my action as you did, — that you did not consider it a matter of "severe condemnation." I am fearful that you did not consult "Mrs. Grundy," however, that you did not submit my letter to the "Weekly Conference of the Ancient Order of Immaculate Gossipers," a "Lodge" of which undoubtedly flourishes in your vicinity. Perhaps you have not as yet deposited your initiation fee; if not "don't!"

You will observe, by the date of this, that our location has been changed since my first. A week ago last Friday we struck our tents at Camp Illinois, and in a few hours we were irreverently treading upon the "Sacred soil" of the "Old Dominion." I cannot write you a long, exciting narrative of our advance into the enemy's country — my imagination is not sufficiently vivid. I saw an occasional spot where a rebel might lie concealed, but I saw no rebel, nor heard the "sharp click of his traitorous rifle." (Vide Northern papers.) And it was aggravating to us "brave volunteers" that, notwithstanding our regiment is the best in the volunteer service no triumphal arches had been erected under which we could pass with doffed caps. We had no imaginary perils to encounter, no "Dragons" which our gallant "St. Georges" could charge upon. We rode through miserable, decrepid old Alexandria, which would sink utterly but for the Union troop quartered in and about it. Our present camp is about three miles southwest of A. We are a small part of the "Army of the Advance."

It gives me unspeakable sorrow to learn that you are not a worshipper at the shrine of Philanthropy. It is one of the greatest evidences of the general degeneration of the human race, that Skepticism has obtained so firm a hold upon the minds of the present generation!! Do I not assume correctly, when I say, that in acknowledging yourself "distrustful," you also declare yourself a subject for distrust. I do not say you are, "of course not," but is it not a fair logical deduction? You write as though "mankind" had very little of your

confidence. Now you will confess that notwithstanding all the homilies written, all the Phillippics thundered, and all the rhetoric displays of Lucystoneites against that veritable part of creation, you are just as liable to put trust in "deceitful man" of the present age, as any, provided, you think him worthy of it. It is now as it always has been, a matter of Judgment alone. I am happy to commend the discrimination you displayed so recently — your "confidence" in me, as a representative of our much abused "kind."

One of my tent-mates received a paper, a day or two since, from his "Particular," within the folds of which was a pair of one-fingered mittens. The poor dear! She probably thought he was suffering — hungry and cold. My friend did not relish the remark "that he had been served only as many a soldier had — been mittened by his lady." By the way, do you imagine that the Army of the United States resembles in appearance the troops that every Fourth of July occasion so much merriment among the juvenile celebrators? I should judge so, from the accounts I see in Northern papers. Mitt Societies for Soldiers! Let me advise you, Sarah, my friend, that if you are acquainted with any young gentlemen, who propose "going to the war," and whom you know would miss sadly the "home sweetcake," after they had left the family hearthstone, to dissuade them from any such rash undertaking. They are not wanted! Uncle Sam calls only for his grown-up children. All others can join the "Home Guards" and win distinction and honor there. But I hope Williamsville will never be invaded!

Quite a laughable occurrence came off in our Company yesterday. All the men were ordered to "fall in," to be vaccinated! One of the men, whom we had elected to the office of "Company Fool," or "Court Jester," resisted. He declared that he did not come into the army to be "vlaccinated," that he wouldn't have his arm "cut off." It required all the strength of two men to bind him, his fear gave him such power. After he had departed we learned that his tent-mates had inoculated into his mind huge stories of the fearful operation. The man is not an Illinoisian, — Pensylvania claims him. Although I am jealous of the fair fame of Illinois, my native state is Massachusetts. But I lived for a number of years, in a town not a thousand miles from Williamsville.

You said truly, when you wrote that George has a "good and honest heart." Acting as he does from impulse, he displays a good, cheerful, contented disposition. May no ill fortune betide him during the war.

It has been said that "the pen is mightier than the sword." The correct rendition of this would be: "The pen is mightier than a sword in the hands of a woman." So, while I wield the sword, will you not use the fitter weapon, the pen? and for my benefit.

I did not intend troubling you with such a lengthy, uninteresting letter, but it has rained all day, and I had nothing else to do. If I am ever a participator in any of the active duties of the war, and am fortunate enough to escape unscathed, I hope I may have something to relate which will serve to while away an odd hour.

George wishes to be remembered. My P.O. address is not changed by our removal. Allow me to remain your friend, though unknown. I thank you sincerely for the permission to write to you occasionally. With much esteem, and regard, I am, your friend,

CHALMERS INGERSOLL

If convenient, may I not receive a letter from you soon? You know the ladies must willingly bear their share of the burdens imposed by this war.

C.

★ 20 ★

WILLIAMSVILLE
JANUARY 23rd, 1862

FRIEND CHALMERS:

Again I find myself undertaking a social chat with my "unknown friend," by way of replying to a very interesting letter that was received some time since. It is needless for me to tell you of the pleasure with which your letter was welcomed, suffice it to say if you could have witnessed its reception you would, I am sure, feel amply compensated for writing, and I cannot but add that "je vous respecte, plus que jamais" for your last letter. Perhaps you would ask, why then so long delay in answering? to which I can only respond by informing you, that for the last four or five weeks I have been almost constantly ill and consequently unable to write, but I have finally recovered and can again enjoy the pleasure of a little conversation with my friend, through that *silent medium the pen* which speaks in mute accents but often louder than the human voice is capable and which pours out all the flowing mind without the toil of speech, giving to man incalculable blessings but I must hasten.

You say that it gives you unspeakable sorrow to learn that I am not a worshipper at the shrine of philanthropy. Did I say that I was not. I trow not. I merely said I was not sufficiently philanthropic to receive *any one* as friend who might be presented, for I have long since learned that "all is not gold that glitters" and I have yet to learn that " 'tis better to trust all and be deceived than lose the bliss of true believing." Then again you ask if in acknowledging myself distrustful I do not also declare myself a subject for distrust? I would reply to this by simply asking another question of exactly the same nature and liable to the same deduction, namely if I suspect *any one* (your own worthy self, for instance) of being very talented and intelligent and possessing many personal endowments, do I declare myself a subject of the same? Not by any means, but is it not as "logically deduced" as the former, and yet how erroneous.

But I will not weary you tonight with a lengthy letter as I am considerably fatigued and suffering somewhat with quite a severe headache. As to our friend George, you will please present him my kind regards and best wishes, and as you have said that you and he are a modern reproduction of the ancient Damon and Pythias I do sincerely hope that you may ever, by your kind and united friendship, and selfsacrificing spirit towards each other, exercise as decided and beneficial an influence not only over one Dionysius of the present day but over many such, as did they and that success may crown your every effort is the sincere wish of your

Friend

Sarah E. Rinewalt

May I not hear from you soon. It is a source of real pleasure to receive letters from absent friends if they be unknown.

SARA

ALEXANDRIA, VA.

FEBRUARY 8th, 1862

FRIEND SARAH:

It is natural that one situated as I am wishes to pass away time in the most pleasurable manner possible. Like thoughtless children, (little Jack Horner for instance) instead of experiencing the joys of anticipation, they devour their confects as soon as possessed, and afterwards realize the pains of their hastiness and inconsiderateness. That's "me." I have unoccupied time — time, that Uncle Sam has no mortgage upon — at least the day for foreclosure is far distant, I trust — and I am going to devote it to the "Great Unknown," sacrificing, for immediate pleasure, the queer, happy sensations a person "encounters," in intending to perform a pleasant task — in procrastinating, so as to heighten the sweets of realization! By all this, I wish you to understand that I have received your kind letter, and cannot refrain from replying so soon. When I have my "coat of arms" I shall have painted upon it a depot "couchant," a train of cars "rampant," and a traveler

"standant!" (Consider the quoted words English.) But the engine will be approaching instead of going from the Depot — denoting that the traveler is rather ahead of than "behind time."

I did ask myself several times, "I wonder why Miss Sarah does not write?" Of course I answered too — I leave you to imagine what the answers were, barely hinting that they were not very flattering to the questioner. There has been so much sickness near me — all manners of ills — that I can sympathize with you in your late affliction. But then you know, my friend, how "sweetly interesting" a "dear convalescent" is. How readily all join in kind attentions when they see the bright aurora of health driving from the cheek the pale shadows of illness! I never was sick since childhood — having all the "sweets," none of the "bitters" — unless the "bitter end of fancy."

Since my last was written the quarters of the 8th Ill" have been removed from the "Slough of Despond" to Alexandria much to our satisfaction, besides bodily comfort. Company G. occupy what was formerly a Foundry, situated upon the Potomac. A large room in the second story serves as a sleeping, eating, drilling and dancing apartment. We have "delightful" "Socials" here! One of the Co. has resurrected a long-ago dead violin, and with a "zeal worthy a better cause" is endeavoring to extract a flow of harmony from it. "Schottisches," "Waltzes," "Polkas," "Quadrilles," "Varsoviennes," &c. &c., have been revived tonight, and the ghost of Ole Bull (is he dead?) has flitted, in exquisite agony, promiscuously about the room, in the "cob-

webby" nooks. The dear people who "brought me up," considered dancing a "gait" that lost souls are compelled to take after they arrive at the huge place Dante explored so thoroughly! And I remember well, my friend, how completely they were horror-stricken one beautiful morning at finding a ladder reaching from the ground up to my windows! A mischievous cousin betrayed me — but the ice had been broken!

Last week a portion of Company G were engaged in scouting in the enemy's country. A house was burnt, and considerable property taken. The first day we were out a detachment of infantry from the 3d Maine were stationed at Pohick Church two miles beyond our picket lines. This Church, you will remember, is celebrated for being the one in which Washington worshipped. It is a quaint building, built in a plain, undecorative style of architecture. The material — brick — I believe was brought from England. The pews are square — two in one — with a seat on each of the four sides, thus making it necessary that a portion of an audience should sit with their backs to the speaker. I send you a small piece of wood chipped from the pew occupied by "George and Martha Washington." I do not know how you regard such "relics" or "mementoes." In my eyes they are not very valuable. But, 'tis the fashion, and "Mrs. Grundy" favors them. — Some people with this tiny piece could conjure up several large "8mo." volumes of recollections and sentiments hovering about one central object, the ghost of the Great Dead. But I can't. What is more with my humor is the leaf and berry I send you. They are the leaf and

berry of the "Holly" — I tore them off from a tree as I was returning from "Secessia." Do you recollect the delightful amusement the Holly affords? It is time-honored, therefore within the bounds of strict propriety. 'Tis this: Whoever can succeed in having a person pass under a Holly tree is entitled to a kiss. Curtin's novel, "Grumps," you know, ends by making "Hope" a victim, (and "Arthur" is the claimant) to this pretty martyrdom. Is it not curious how ingenuity is taxed to make the promptings of Nature proper? Some go so far as to think that a tree cannot be perfectly "au fait" unless it resembles a geometrical figure! Man tutoring his maker. — Suspicions are too often ill-grounded. You may "suspect" and at the same time be wrong. — But I admit you have the best of the argument at present. Space will not permit me to show you "the errors of your way." — George is well, happy, as he always is, and desires me, whenever I write to you, to remember him to you.

I hope you will excuse this uninteresting letter. There has been so much "fun" about me that it has somewhat confused the few ideas I entertained. — I ask the same question you do. "May I not hear from you soon?" Believe me, when I say your letters are heartily welcomed, and looked for. I wish to impress upon your mind that it is a duty you owe your country to preserve your health, particularly since the Government has engaged so many expressly to satisfy the demands of disease — and you know the "laborer ought to be worthy of his hire," which he won't be if you do it for nothing.

I resolved, when I sat down, that I would not write on three sides of this sheet! What a pretty "petite Comedy" could be made from our acquaintance, "The Unknown Friends"!

Must I wait so long again ere I hear from you again?

With much esteem,
Your friend,
CHALMERS INGERSOLL

★ 28 ★

WILLIAMSVILLE

MARCH 9th, 1862

FRIEND CHALMERS:

Having been left solitary and alone this evening, I find myself enjoying calm and serious meditation, and among the many things that *memory, — the storehouse of the past,* awakens in my mind, I see — robed in all the honor and dignity imaginable, "the unknown friends." And I cannot but smile, when I think of their unusual acquaintance, and notice the interest that *I* feel for them, *I* who have been so averse to any such proceeding, and then a wish voluntarily wells up from the depths of my warm heart, that no ill may arise from their acquaintance, although such has already been predicted. I have no fear however.

With these thoughts then comes the silent conviction that *I* am one kind favor in *your* debt and then follows the resolve that tonight shall see that debt discharged. I shall not apologize for being so extremely dilatory in responding to your last kind letter, for I dislike to make or hear apologies, they are generally a palliation of something not strictly correct, by which

we wrong ourselves and deceive our friends, and they are too often like those for not singing, the apology better than the song. This I think would be quite applicable to no small number of our young lady letter writers, myself not excepted, but I will not linger.

I do sincerely wish that I might to-night indite something that would interest you. In the regular duties and stern realities of the daily routine, the monotony of a *country-girl's* life presents but little that would either please or interest, and the few small items that serve to make up the limited amount of excitement in this quiet locality, I fear would far from interest you. I might mention to you the "mite societies" that we as a community attend to twice every week, "for the benefit of the soldiers" they say, and I might recount the large number of socks, and still larger number of mittens, and a host of other things "too numerous to mention" that have been manufactured by the patriotic matrons and maids of this little nook, but such things are of so common an occurrence now-a-days that they are hardly worth referring to. But yet, my friend, you may learn, that while our fathers, brothers, and *friends* are fearlessly engaged in the cause which now so agitates the land, we are not drones in the great hive of life but are "up and doing" and the spirit of Revolutionary grandmothers wants but an opportunity to show itself. Woman may possess an equal share of the element of greatness with man, but she has not an equal opportunity of displaying it. She never was made to lead on to victory the brave and heroic spirits of the land, or to cause the Senate halls

to resound with *her* impassioned voice. Her course leads mainly through the quiet valley of domestic retirement; there she is ever at home, although her thoughts are far from being confined within the limits of the home circle. In times like the present they will ever and anon turn towards the battlefield to the dear ones there, and prayers for their safety are continually ascending to him who rules our every destiny. And now my friend believe me when I tell you that I often think of my friends in the army, yourself in particular, since your letters are so very interesting, and I hope and pray for their success. But I find I will have to bring this uninteresting letter to a close. Think of me as your friend.

SARAH E. RINEWALT

P.S. Although I have been rather remiss in replying to your last letter, may I not hope for an early reply, and let me remind you that your letters cannot be too long.

Remember me kindly to our friend George believe me your friend

SARAH

★ 31 ★

ALEXANDRIA, VA.
APRIL 15th, 1862

FRIEND SARAH:

For the first time in several weeks I have opportunity and inclination both to write to you. Inclination has been no stranger to me, but opportunity — I've "had none of it." Your letter of the 9th ult. was rec'd while I was at Fairfax C.H., three weeks since. It is useless for me to assure you how heartily it was welcomed — and how eagerly it was read — the dim light of my camp-fire, striving heroically for existence through the drenching rain, assisting to prolong the pleasing task of its perusal. If the friends of the Soldiers knew how letters buoy up the spirits, and, perhaps, strengthen the nerve of the drenched, mud-covered, and hungry "boys," they would scarcely fail in their part of the "contract."

Since the 10th of March, I have been living a "field life." Do you know what that is, my friend? I do not know as I am fully qualified *yet* to explain the meaning of the term — comprehensively, but I will try. A long day's march, in a steady rain, through mud

"awfully" deep, — a camp at night — anywhere, without tents, and *four* hard crackers a day per man for rations, and what one can "confiscate" for the poor horse. — This is the life day after day, occasionally enlivened, however, by the shooting, at long range, at the enemy. Thus far, we of the "Eighth" talk of "bullets within a foot of us," — none of us having had our lives saved by our sweethearts' miniatures or that equally hallowed article — a dime Testament. We have scoured the country from the Potomac to the Rappahannock, — rebellious ducks, turkeys, geese, sheep, hogs &c. &c. have paid with their lives for their temerity in breathing Virginia atmosphere — many lives have been lost, but they were of the above families — and that is all we have accomplished. 'Tis highly flattering to us, who have deserted home and business, to know that we have been the fortunate instruments in the accomplishment of the great work just completed in this section. Our banners aren't covered with gilded inscriptions of fields won and bravery displayed *yet!* They are going to be one of these days!

You do not wish me to narrate incidents of my vagabond life. The papers are teeming with them. We of the army make history and story, the press preserve them. If your friends pass unscathed through this period of Chance, they can tell what they know much better than they can write it.

Thus you write: "Woman *may* possess an equal share of the elements of greatness with man." Do *you* doubt it? If she cannot herself lead a charge, her cheering words, her brave forgetfulness of self, and

her assurances of love, inspire the man, and render him a "stranger to fear." It is said that "woman admires bravery." We know it! We recognize and acknowledge that admiration as one of the chief incentives to courageous deeds. To the "quiet valley of domestic retirement" do men always turn, after the fierce storm of war has swept by, for in that "valley" is the light — the stars — we love the most. The attainment of that "valley" — the remembrance of which has moved the arm and quickened the sight, and steeled the heart in many a wild, fierce strife — wins the goal of our ambition. Low spoken words of truth and constancy will sway mighty minds, where "impassioned tones within Senate walls" will fall unheeded. The influence you possess, my friend, is great enough — exert it in a true womanly manner, and you will never mourn the loss of power and of dominion. We love to rule, — but how much more do we love to be ruled. Joan d'Arc, *I* think, was a fanatic, but the lovely wife of the mighty Czar of all the Russias was a true woman, and her influence was felt by millions.

There are many "soothsayers" now-a-days! Many predictions are uttered. If one strays from familiar haunts to gather a few flowers in an unknown field, why, "beware" of their perfume, for "who knows" but it may be subtle poison. Custom and etiquette says "so-and-so," and propriety repeats the burden — how "stupid" or else how "designing" must one be who violates the law! "Can any good come out of it?" Though our acquaintance was formed in so unusual a way, I trust our friendship will be none the less sin-

cere, and that instead of ill, much pleasure will accrue to both. Pardon me if I say that your letters and good wishes, and regards have grown to be almost a necessity to me. Though unknown to sight, to mind a valued friend, respected and honored, and I trust that the thoughtless act of a moment, innocent in intention, which gave me so lasting a pleasure will never need be repented of by either. Having once set at naught the laws of society, I propose doing so the second time. Last winter, I had several photographs taken, and on my return to Alexandria, I find they have not all disappeared. That you may not imagine me another "Veiled Prophet," I take the liberty to send you one. The picture resembles me, except it gives me rather too youthful an appearance, — but then, "who knows" but I may have unknowingly imbibed of the waters of the Fountain of Life — while drinking out of some of Virginia's muddy rills! I can't recommend the artist. I hope you will excuse this second departure from established etiquette, — but if you choose to retaliate, I shall receive and endure my punishment without a murmur.

We are waiting here in this city to be transported down the river. How soon we shall go is unknown. Many thousands have preceded us, — gone to take part in the second Siege of Yorktown, — to re-enact there the scenes of Donelson, Pea Ridge, and Pittsbury. These victories have not been won without my family being called upon to lament. Our home circle is being sadly broken. At Donelson, a brother escaped, but an old friend was maimed for life. At Pea Ridge we mourn the loss of a brother, who fell leading his company

against thrice the number. I am waiting anxiously the particulars of the Pittsbury battle, for I had a brother there, the same who was at Ft. Henry and Donelson. You know my friend, that I not only am away from home and friends, but have brothers and friends whose safety and welfare are more imperilled than mine. My mother's sons are all where they thought, a year ago, *duty* bade them go.

George is well. His regards he sends you. You bid me to a task I willingly accept. "Think of me ever as a friend" — and I thank you for the dear privilege you give me, — for I disliked to do so in the surreptitious manner I had been thinking of you. If I trespass upon your patience by my long letters, forgive me. — Please add "Follow Regiment," to my address. I trust you will find it convenient to write me soon.

Please receive my photograph without offence. I send it to further our acquaintance, — that, at least, you may have some idea of the personal appearance of the "Unknown Friend." Thanking you very much for the assurances you give me of your friendship, I hope you will receive the dearest regards and best wishes of

CHALMERS INGERSOLL

P.S. You should not, friend Sarah, give me permission to write long letters. The pen is an old companion of mine, and there is no telling how long our sessions may be, when re-united after a long separation. — I wish you "pleasant dreams." Good-night!

CHAM.

WMS. VILLE

MAY 4th, 1862

FRIEND CHALMERS:

And is it really you *my unknown friend* that I see lying before me? can it be possible that imagination has proved itself so decidedly unavailable? Yet 'tis even so. I had never once imagined to behold so "youthful" a personage in the likeness of my friend. And it is very natural that your personal appearance should have been very many times portrayed in my mind. I was very happy indeed to receive your photograph, and let me assure you I could not have been better pleased with its appearance. It will certainly tend to further our acquaintance as well as strengthen our friendship. And who is there, I ask, that loves pure, sincere friendship more than your friend. It is indeed one of the fairest productions of the human soul, the cordial of life, the tincture of our sorrows and the multiplicon of our joys, and 'tis the source of peace and happiness, *and* the fountain from which streams of love and kindness ever flow. What can this world be to those who

possess no friends, who are compelled to turn to the cold charity of the world for encouraging words and kindly smiles, and who traverse "life's dreary waste" uncared for by all? Really life must be to them an "empty void" a troubled wave upon the mighty deep of time, with sorrow and disappointment at every turn. Oh! can aught be so lamentable as the condition of such an one. I am ever thankful and "feel especially grateful that *I* (or rather — but you will hear more of this subsequently) was capable of attracting towards "myself" the friendship of a distant and personally unknown person, for I have found it a real pleasure to "stray from familiar haunts to gather flowers in an unknown field" and in those wanderings I have not only derived much pleasure but an equal amount of profit, and my earnest desire is, that I may *ever* demand the friendship, "respect and honor" of my friend.

I mourn with you the loss of your brother, and my heart goes out in sympathy for your mother who is called to mourn the loss of her dear son, and I am sad indeed when I think of the *many* souls that have been and are continually being sacrificed in this unjust and unholy cause, and when I think of my *friends* in the army, of the hardships they endure, and of the many evils they encounter, I cannot but hope and pray for them. Truly if it were not for the blessings of hope, we would at times quite despair — but

— "Even through the shower
Of teardrops on life's way
The rainbow promises of *hope*
Will dance and make us gay."

Nothing very unusual has transpired to break the monotony of my quiet life since I last wrote you, except that I have been somewhat initiated into the mysteries of "house-cleaning," that is, I have assisted in the annual inundation of every nook and corner from garret to cellar, but I have not, like the "Dutch girls" described by Irving, been so addicted to scrubbing as to become almost amphibious. *Not quite like that.* But I fear of wearying your patience, yet I have something to relate to you which will no doubt surprise, and perhaps incur displeasure, I trust not however. But to commence. Did you ever imagine that it *might not be* "Friend Sarah" that addressed you? That perhaps she had a *sister* who wrote you occasionally and who was taking quite an interest in your welfare? Of course not, you knew nothing of the kind. Listen I will tell you. When your first letter reached here, Sister Sarah was absent from home, spending a few days in Buffalo. She gave me permission when she left home to open her letters and answer them if I felt so disposed. I as a matter of course opened *your* letter and after perusing it I could not resist the temptation to answer it. I did it however in her name thinking that she would take up the correspondence when she returned home, providing I was fortunate enough to receive an answer. A second letter came more interesting than the first and I rather felt as though I would have to answer that too, and with a very little persuasion sister Sarah said "Yes" and hence the second was answered as the first, the third the same, but the fourth, alas! I began to think that it had been Lottie alias Sarah long enough,

and as I am naturally a little conscientious I felt as though you should know who it really is that calls you friend, and finds much pleasure in so doing.

Yet if I have done aught to offend — forgive, for I would not that you should feel in the least displeased. You will not I trust, for "What's in a name." My best wishes present to our friend George, and as regards my photograph, I will be pleased to "retaliate" if you so desire. I hope to receive an answer soon, and with a kind good night, accept the dearest wishes and lasting regards of your true friend

Lottie B. Rinewalt

CAMP NEAR HARRISON'S LANDING, VA.

JULY 27th, 1862

MY FRIEND "LOTTIE":

Can I in any way make my peace with "Lottie" *alias* Sarah? Have I committed the "unpardonable sin," and must I go seek out some furiously burning lime kiln wherein to subject myself to the effects of great heat? Indeed, my friend, if I thought I did not have a fair excuse for permitting your letter to remain so long unanswered, I do not think I should possess sufficient impudence to address you now. Your letter of May 4th was received when I was at New Kent Court House. At that time I, in common with the whole army, expected to be in Richmond in a "few days." So I concluded I would date my next to you from that city. But time passed away — we approached Chickahominy slowly — then crossed it and fought a great battle within sight of the spires of our "Mecca." But we did not enter, though rumor every day assured us that "to-morrow" would see the defiant capital humbled. Often was your last letter taken up with the determination to answer it, when always the words, "Richmond *must* fall soon"

stopped me, and made me adhere to the original resolution of addressing you from Richmond. It was the same pride actuating me then, that actuated our whole army, — our goal was before us — within view — and grasp it we swore to do. — *But we didn't.* That ubiquitous gentleman, Rev. "Stonewall" Jackson, meddled with our extreme right. Hill, Longstreet, Anderson &c. saw fit to visit us too, and — we gave them *room.* We crossed the Chickahominy, supposing, of course, we were to march on to Richmond. We went the other way — fighting and retreating, until neither we nor the rebels could go farther. And that is my excuse for not dating my letter, "Richmond," several weeks ago! May the circumstances plead my cause so eloquently, that no shade of displeasure shall rest upon your brow!

If I were only some one else! — If, when our correspondence was in the initiative, I had only assumed a *nom de plume,* — had been some body else, yet still myself — where would the joke have been? Wouldn't the "biter have been bit." Would not the mischievous "Lottie" (I'm not sure now of the name of my fair and dear friend and correspondent) have found out what was meant by "Diamond cut diamond?" But, alas! I was no diamond! and "Lottie" was. The result has been disastrous to my dignity, and a fit punishment to my impudence. If you could have seen how completely "cut up" I was, after reading your letter, you would have been greatly amused. You will excuse me but I laughed — I did, most decidedly laugh. The joke was at my expense, I admit, but it was so prettily and neatly done, that the risibilities of my nature mutinied

against my insulted manhood, and good nature carried the day, for I recognized in "Lottie" alias Sarah a kindred spirit — one after my own — (I was going to write heart, but have concluded not to, as I am not sure that I possess that fabled article) kind, who will have sport and fun at all risks, assuming the consequences afterwards. But was it necessary to do wrong to your nature in order to explain the joke and excuse yourself? Did you not lay claim to a duality in nowise belonging to you? Have you not assumed the possession of a trait of character to which you can show no deed. You said "I am naturally a little conscientious." Once I was an advocate of the theory that conscience was innate — but hereafter I ascribe to the doctrine of "Infant Damnation." If any one asks why, with a sad countenance and a trembling forefinger (I am particular which digital member I use) I shall point to you and exclaim "Thou art the — *proof!*" The moral culture of young ladies now-a-days is dreadfully neglected — a sure sign of the gradual degeneration of the race! I know you possess many graces and good qualities, but do not, my very dear friend, attempt any "tricks upon travellers," — Don't crown your head with more laurel than grows within your own enclosures!

It is not necessary, after what I have written, to assure you that I am not "offended" for I have "set down naught in malice" — "What's in a name?" Nothing! so long as it interferes not in our friendship. Juliet conquered her aversion to the name of Montague for the sake of the sentiments she entertained towards Romeo, so I, although "Sarah" is a "household word"

in our family, will still think kindly of the name "Lottie," because of the friend who bears it. Am I not generous? and forgiving? Of course I am!

Do you know, Lottie, that I take your "confession" as an indication of the honesty of our professions of mutual friendship? And that hereafter earnestness and sincerity shall mark our intercourse? I trust, now, that I am on an equality with you, save in one particular, that we may each entertain a "pure, sincere friendship" for each other, — a regard outlasting the fleeting moments consumed in assuring each other, by letter, of our mutual respect. Honest and sincere let it be, — each reposing trust in the honor of the other, being fully assured that our confidence will not be betrayed. Time will increase our knowledge of each other, and either deepen or destroy our friendship, for none but a genuine regard can withstand the test of age. Then permit me, Lottie, to say to myself, "Lottie is my friend, a true, sincere friend, for our friendship strengthens as weeks pass by, and it *may,* perchance, deepen into confidence" — for confidence is the sought-for result of all friendships.

The "Iron Rule" guides me in my conduct in life. The law of retaliation is the most equitable to all parties generally. Though we often speak of "even-handed justice" with censure, still we admit to ourselves that it "served him right." Therefore, it would please me much if you *would retaliate,* for I know it will be a great pleasure to me to possess your photograph or likeness. You say I may have it if I desire it. I do, *earnestly.*

"Lottie," (I can't resist calling you "Lottie," without other title. You have one of those names that steal imperceptibly into one's heart, *tenderizing* the objects they grace, and when the tongue speaks them, it requires an effort to suppress the endearing adjective *"dear"*). You must pardon my long silence, this time. Circumstances, such as I have stated, alone prevented — are they excuse enough? Of all the personal property I possessed before the retreat of the army, your letters only remain. Fire and the enemy have taken charge of everything else. A cowardly teamster ran off and left the Company wagons fast in the mud. Your letters give me pleasure, — I wish they could be more frequent. They will be hereafter, if I can have my wish about it.

If I thought it would interest you I would narrate the various incidents coming under my observation during the "Battles before Richmond." I was engaged actively but two days, — the two first. Our regiment alone fought the advancing army of Jackson for over five hours and then with the "Bucktails" for three hours longer. We lost one Captain and several privates. But I will not occupy your time. I have sat here on the very verge of the bank of James River, all this Sabbath afternoon, writing to you. There is nothing about me but the "pomp and paraphernalia of war." The misshapen Monitor and stately men-of-war lie lazily upon the surface of the stream, keeping their grim watch on all that approach from the up river. Cannon, horses, men, muskets, — nothing else. — Is it to be wondered at that I have written so much? That

I have dared to ask so much of your time? — But we soldiers must think, — "Home and friends" is the burthen of all our heart songs. Undoubtedly my letter will remind you of the serio-comic song of "The Battle of the Nile." Pardon me, for this "Cause."

Please direct your letters, "Company G, 8th Illinois Cavalry, Washington, D. C. Follow Regiment."

I trust it will be convenient for you to write soon as we are liable to move at any moment, and I wish to receive a letter from you once again.

Dear "Lottie," receive the assurances of my high esteem and real sentiments of friendship for you.

Sincerely, your friend,

CHALMERS INGERSOLL

George desires to be remembered, but he desires to be held in remembrance no more than *Chalmers.*

C. I.

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
SEPTEMBER 12th, 1862

DEAR FRIEND LOTTIE:

A nomadic life has been mine in the past few weeks. No "child of the desert" ever surpassed the flittings of your friend. On "land and water, ship and shore," Uncle Samuel (or Stonewall Jackson) has kept us continually moving, until we have left the ruined, deserted Virginia far to the "Sunny South," and now revel in beautiful Maryland. Through all this journeying your kind letter of August 3d has accompanied me and been read and re-read. It is so pleasant to read kind words when we think them sincere. Is it not?

Before I commenced this letter, I wished a very foolish wish. You must blame the loveliness of the scenery that encircles me. I said to myself. "Would that Lottie were with me to enjoy this, as lovely a landscape that was ever made more beautiful by the golden gleams of the setting Southern sun. Then, perhaps, I could borrow inspiration from beauty, and speak my thoughts as they start from the brain." I know 'twas very foolish — very childish to long for what is for be-

yond the Possibles. But we poor mortals are so imperfect, that we even criticize beauteous Nature, and say if such an object was in the picture, it would *then* be perfect. So it was with me. Admitting, as I did, the loveliness of the scene, do not chide me if I thought, "Lottie's presence is necessary to form a perfect whole." All occasioned by the mood I was in, dear Lottie, and the influence the great old oaks about me exerted over my spirit. I do not wonder that the old, mysterious Druids chose the venerable oaks under the wide-spreading canopy of which to offer up their sacrifices to the "Unknown God."

I am thankful to the managers of the Southern Army that they have changed the scene of operations. Thankful that they have transplanted us from poor, ruined, and deserted Virginia into this delightful region. The farther North, the nearer are we to the Mecca of every Northern soldier — home — O! that our pilgrimage was ended!

Please tender Mrs. Baine my thanks for her kind remembrance, and my best wishes for her future happiness — If I had thought in time I should, I verily believe, have been tempted to place a piece of the cake under my pillow (pine boughs) and in my dreams peeped into the future. But, I forgot the pretty superstition until it was too late! Not knowing what the Fates would have revealed to me if I had not been so careless. You must, indeed, be lonely now, occasionally, in the absence of your sister. But as absence lengthens, memory dims, and pleasures of the past are forgotten for pleasures of the present. It is needless to assure you,

my friend, of my entire willingness, were it possible, to assist you in driving away your loneliness by my presence occasionally. But Uncle Samuel says emphatically "Furloughs are played out," and my sentiments harmonize with the mandate. And I can sympathize with you only by letter, and if I am successful in giving you even a moment's pleasure I am more than repaid by your dear missives in return. I trust that, hereafter, you will attach all blame to circumstances, and not to my inclinations, if I do not answer your letters promptly. When I am willing to deprive myself of my greatest pleasure, then, and not till then, shall I willfully neglect to write. My only fear is that I shall fail to interest you, and not prove myself worthy, in your estimation, to be a friend, and a *cherished* one. 'Tis my greatest hope, that our friendship shall ever live. I do not attempt to conceal the fact that what was the offspring of an idle hour has grown to be the chiefest pleasure of my life. And your letters, your regard, your friendship, dear Lottie, are my greatest treasures — I have the jewels, — do *you* think me wrong in wishing for the casket? — I hope you will find it convenient to write *very* soon, and if you are willing, you may *retaliate*. You remember? Accept my best wishes for your happiness.

With much esteem, I am,

Yours,

CHALMERS

Please direct your letters Chalmers Ingersoll, Company G, 8th Illinois Cavalry, Washington, D. C. Follow Regt.

CHALMERS

KNOXVILLE, IND.
OCTOBER 10th, 1862

DEAR FRIEND LOTTIE:

It has entirely escaped my memory whether I am in your debt or not. So completely has been my time engrossed by the duties of my vocation that I have only had leisure to wonder *why* I have not heard from Lottie. But now that we are at last promised a season of quietness, I propose to discover the reason why.

It is really with a feeling of thankfulness that I look back upon the dangers I, with others, have passed through unscathed — I believe if my horoscope was cast, a lucky planet would be found to have been in the ascendant when I was born. "Like enough" — Not so with the hundreds of brave fellows who now moulder beneath the earth of the bloody field of Antietam — Honor the dead, friend Lottie, for like heroes they fought, and like heroes they died, but as *conquerors* they sleep unto eternity.

I have just returned from chasing Stuart. Isn't he a brave and dashing officer — just my beau ideal of the cavalry commander. When I saw the last of his gallant men mount the bluffs on the Virginia side of the

Potomac I could not repress a cry of admiration, though I was chagrined and mortified at our failure. What a fright the old Dutch farmers and their *rotund* "vrows" must have experienced in Pennsylvania! But I am fearful that many of Pennsylvania's blooming lasses will whisper: "And the Captain with his whiskers stole a sly glance at me!"

Thanks to the fortunes of war and to *merit,* George Warner is now our Lieutenant. He deserved his promotion, and may he live long to enjoy its benefits and the honor.

I have just taken from my Memorandum Book your letters. You would laugh could you see them in their present condition. Ragged and soiled, some portions almost obliterated by being wet — they can truthfully be compared to an old, well-tried friend. But the most noticeable feature, and the one I wish to impress upon your mind, is the *dates,* or the great length of times between the dates. Thus, one is written "May 4th" and the next "August 3d," and the next (like Christmas) is *coming* — I hope. What good staid followers of Propriety we are, Lottie, friend — What a regular *Quarterly Correspondence* we carry on. How carefully and *successfully* we guard ourselves against the impulses of friendship and the urgings of the heart. Models are we of prudence and — oh! Confound it, Lottie dear, let's do away with the "quarterly inventory" of our sentiments and introduce in its stead a "Daily Cash Book" — Only think what a comfort it would be to the poor devil whose nose and toes are being chilled by the bleak winds that play ever about

these mountain peaks, if a neat little missive was to greet his eyes and heart very frequently. Now he does not receive them, and so is obliged to eat chestnuts and get his fingers full of "three thousand thistles"!! — "Poor old soldier! Poor old soldier! Kicked and beaten, and sent to ——— ! Poor old soldier!"

Two months ago I was confident that this war would be over this fall. Now I have no such opinion. I have stopped thinking — it's a poor pastime for a soldier. Instead of seeing my friends this winter, the spectres of "winter quarters" haunt me. Great is McClellan, but I guess he might be *enlarged* "slightually."

I am not going to tell you that you are very often in my thoughts, for I have written that some several times — but, I'll be shot if I don't believe I am "in love" with one whom I have never *seen*. "Preposterous!" but, unfortunately, a fact. 'Tis with much perturbation of spirit that the confession is made, and I would not make it now if not for the hope of forgiveness! *Vivas* for the little blind chap with wings!

There has been considerable cannonading at Harper's Ferry to-day. Perhaps the rebels have attacked it again.

I am naturally an enemy to *space* — Can't even permit this to remain unoccupied. I hope you will have leisure time sufficient to answer very soon. I shall look for a letter from you next week — may I not? Warner wishes to be remembered. Please excuse the style of this letter for the sake of the matter.

Wishing you every happiness, I remain ever yours

CHALMERS

EDGE HILL, KING GEORGE CO., VA.
JANUARY 25th, 1863

DEAR FRIEND LOTTIE:

Last evening my mind was relieved from a burden which it has borne very unwillingly for several weeks. From your long delay in writing to me, I was fearful our delightful (to me) correspondence and acquaintance was at an end. I have chided myself many times, — self-accusations without number had proved me the cause, if our friendship was to relapse into the coldness of strangers. Last evening your letter of the 19th was received, — and I admit, dear friend, that I tore the envelope with apprehension — and all my fears were dispelled for I was assured that you still thought of the "unknown" Chalmers, and that my *bluntness* was, if not forgotten, forgiven through your generous leniency. And now, that I know you are willing to receive my letters, I take the first opportunity to write you — I should have answered your letter rec'd several weeks since, if I had dared. I had a very unpleasant picture always before me, that effectually silenced me — the fear of having incurred your displeasure. This alone restrained my pen, this is the reason your

letter remained unanswered. More than once have I sat down determined to pass an hour with Lottie, but the "date" and "Dear friend Lottie" was as far as my judgment would permit me to go. Now, however, is the future bright again, and many a pleasant "converse" I hope to have with my friend — I have a right to call you *friend* now, Lottie, for *now* I know you — have had an introduction, and no more does the fear of censure from "Mrs. Grundy" trammel my pen and enchain my thoughts. Last night I heard: "Mr. Ingersoll, permit me to make you acquainted with Miss Lottie B. Rinewalt." I *permitted!* Can you conceive how readily? and how eagerly my eyes were turned towards "hers"? — I had so long wished for your photograph, my friend, so often said to myself "will she give it me?" that the pleasure of intense expectancy realized was mine when I found your photograph enclosed in your letter. You know, dear Lottie, that I thank you much for your kindness. And may I say that you "are all my fancy painted you," that I recognize in your features what so charmed me in your letters, the beauty and graces of an intellectual and lovely mind. Ah! Lottie, your fears should have been few, indeed, that the picture before me, could "break the spell" which has been thrown over me. Through your letters I had learned to admire your amiable mind — your photograph has taught me to admire none the less *Lottie* — I sincerely believe you will have no cause to regret the confidence you have bestowed upon me — you never will if the honor of a gentleman and the friendship of a friend can prevent it.

Many an adventure has been gone through by me since I last wrote you and still I have remained unharmed — while others have been stricken down. I often wonder if I shall always be so fortunate — if, indeed, I shall pass through the innumerable dangers of battle and camp unscathed. The men of our Regiment have so often *conquered* danger, that they have at last arrived at that point where they *scorn* it, apparently. At the battle of Fredericksburg the 8th was not actively engaged — They were spectators. From the heights this side the river they had a "bird's eye view" of the whole of the terribly magnificent spectacle — we saw our men advance bravely to the attack up the hill and over the fields, we saw the sudden sheet of flame which shot from the enemy's lines, again and again we saw it, and then on the hill-side where all before had been calm and still and brown, we saw our men, broken and decimated, yielding the ground they had gained, leaving behind them the hundreds to bear testimony to the world that, though unsuccessful, they had bravely and heroically done their duty — More of a certain kind of courage, which might be called *obstinacy,* is required in the infantry service than in the Cavalry. In the latter, recklessness and rapidity of thought and action, hazardous ventures which can only be successful when the actor has address and carlessness of danger, are the great requisites. But in the former, the men are for hours exposed to the missiles of the enemy — with them it is a game of "give and take" all day long, if a friend drops down they must see him in agony at their feet, for hours, perhaps, for they must "hold their position" and cannot

move off to new ground. At the battle of Fredericksburg we witnessed all the sublimity of a battle with none of the inseparable horrors, for we could not hear the low hoarse cries of the wounded, nor see the sufferers as they were removed.

Christmas day our regiment removed twenty-five miles down the river from Fredericksburg, for the purpose of "picketing" the river and the country between the Potomac and the Rappahannock — An indolent and almost luxurious life we have lived since. In a section of country that has thus far escaped the ravages and devastation of war, and intensely Southern in sentiment, our *radical* regiment has much to congratulate themselves upon. But here as well as elsewhere one sees the extremes of worldly prosperity, intensified, perhaps by existing circumstances. From the beautiful mansion of the planter the miserable hovel of the "poor white" can be seen. I have never seen *destitution* and actual starvation until now — Many of the people are actually starving. They have neither meat nor bread nor garments. It is really painful to do them a kindness, for they appear so abject in their gratefulness. And did I not have my own testimony I could not believe that an American could be so ignorant as these poor people of Virginia. From what I have seen of Southern society the "poor white trash" occupy the *fourth* grade, thus: 1st Planters and intelligent men; 2d Slaves; 3d Turkey buzzards; 4th Free negroes and poor whites; 5th Yankees and Northerners.

I have tried to comply with your request to "write soon." Not, I confess, so much to please you as

to please myself! This may appear ungallant and rude, but by writing to you, shall I not if you observe the "law of equity" receive the favors I so much desire? And indeed, dear Lottie, we *must* do away with the manner in which we have corresponded, now that I can see you, for possessing your "picture," every time I look at it, I shall want it to *speak* — and from your *letters* only can I now give the eyes the sparkle and brilliancy of sentiment and wit, and wreathe the features with animate beauty and smiles — But I will not urge you for I *ought* to be contented with what I have — but I am not! I trust, however, that this time my example will be worthy of your attention, at least. Again I thank you for your kindness. As you are ever in my memory I bid you good night, *not* adieu. Accept, dear Lottie, my deep regards and esteem, and allow me to write,

Affectionally yours,

CHALMERS

Lieut. Warner wishes to be remembered — I now wish you good *morning in advance* of the sun.

Truly,

C. I.

EDGE HILL, KING GEORGE CO., VA.
JANUARY 28th, 1863

DEAR FRIEND LOTTIE:

I've half a mind to do something imprudent, if not impertinent, again. Here I am, with absolutely nothing to occupy my attention or my hands — a whole long winter's evening before me, with no books to read, no letters remaining unanswered, no supper to eat, for I have already devoured a goodly portion of a confiscated fowl, — and nobody to talk with in the mood I am in. Is not my condition forlorn and distressing? And then the climax is, I have been reading to-day Miss Pardue's "Rival Beauties," — one so angelically sweet and beautifully perfect, the other so naughty, so strong-minded, so improbably lovely in feature and so hideously deformed in mind, that I must do some outlandish action to rid my mind of its terrible incubus — produced by a knowledge of so *much* perfection and its opposite. Do you know that we poor men would have the most abiding faith in the weaker part of creation — would willingly believe that they were near of kin to white-winged angels or their betters — if our simplicity

and credulity was not the subject of ridicule for the "dear, delightful creatures" themselves? The absence among our modern men of that chivalrous honor which formed so large a share of the possessions of ancient gentlemen, is bitterly complained of and severely commented upon by many — they insisting, that what was *once* idol, must always be idol. If I remember correctly among the ancients *iron* was a precious metal, was used for currency, and in the ignorance of the people they were contented that it should be so. But knowledge has a sad tendency to open the eyes, and in time these ironmongers discovered that iron was a base metal and that gold and silver were preferable and more valuable. Now I wouldn't compare the iron specie of ancient times to the lovely dames of the "Age of Chivalry," to whom the gallant Knights paid their *devoirs* in so exemplary a manner, even to the chopping off of rivals' heads, and sending their "ladye-loves" necklaces of preserved ears, and musical castanets of the pearly teeth of opponents whom they had conquered in "honorable single combat," — but hasn't time and knowledge and discoveries shown that there is a *standard* value for everything — that what was once valuable, though still so, is only so for its *merits?* — Therefore if all womankind persist in their declarations that a man is, in nine cases in ten, the most egregiously duped person possible, when he believes one of this kind, who is to blame if at last we venture to be of that opinion too. But I dislike Miss Pardue — her style and her plots and dialogues. Who *does* like to be undeceived when he is resolutely and persistently bent upon being a victim of

deception. I don't — I've read somewhere that " 'tis better to suffer martyrdom in an unworthy cause than to not be a martyr at all." Rather a questionable proposition, but apt.

I am living in what may very appropriately be called a "Bower of Beauty," of magnificent proportions and fairy-like decorations. If a band or troupe of little, jolly, ethereal spirits were only continually hopping about among the bushes the picture and the reality would be complete. Yesterday morning it commenced snowing, and *this* morning the tall pines and branchy cedars which surround us so densely were loaded with snow. Every twig had received its badge of purity, and every bush its raiment of beauty, and the aged tree the hoary crown of accumulated years — Indeed, my surroundings are almost seductive enough to make one *perpetrate* poetry — if it was in him. — To be perfectly truthful, I confess I did *try* to do a little in that line, but miserably failed. Only read:

> How pretty the trees in their raiments so white.
> (Judging from the load they can't be very *light*)
> Robed silently and tenderly, flake by flake —
> (Confound it! there's a chunk lodged plumb in my neck.)
> As a loving mother her infant arrays,
> (Won't there be mud, slush, and "sich" one of these days)
> Not caring a fig for the way *a la mode* —
> (And no bottom at all to the miserable road.)

And I couldn't write any more for I had an idea that it was hardly equal to Tennyson, nor Longfellow, and I have a horror of "odious comparisons" — and then it gives one a headache finding out what word rhymes with another. — By the way, I wonder if some of those

chaps who sell their brains at so much a "foot," forgetting that they cannot obtain a new supply when their present stock is exhausted (and some are endeavoring *now* to sell their empty *shelves*), as I was going to say, I wonder if these "poets" don't hunt up twenty or thirty words of rhyming affinity, and then manufacture the sentiments to suit the words. I judge so, from the bungling specimens so numerous everywhere. But I am a poor judge, for my mother has told me that it was very difficult to make me learn my own *feet* and to use them, and therefore I offer no pretensions to an understanding of the *feet* or *foot* of the "Nine Muses."

Our principal business nowadays is: catching deserters, feeding poor people, eating dyspepsia-giving biscuits, waiting for the western army to whip the Southern Confederacy, and for Gen. *Advance* to take command of this huge agglomeration of man-machines on the Rappahannock. Oh, yes, there is another: watching the papers to learn whether the Northern traitors have yet been "hung by the neck until they are dead — dead — dead — and God have mercy on their souls."

I wish you were a *politician* for a few minutes — opposed to me in principle. I would delight to argue a few points — show up the heinousness of your professions, and all that, but you are not. On the contrary, you are — what? Egad! If I should say what I think, it would be a curious collection of words for a compliment, but still it would be one. I believe I am about as much of a flatterer as that remarkably affable old gentleman who used to live in a tub, — but if I had his lantern and was searching for a face to please *me,* I should hold

it so close to your photograph that undoubtedly the heat would scorch it! I knew it — I was sure I would display my awkwardness, but how could I say what I wanted to otherwise? If I had said you are beautiful, it might make you vain, and that wouldn't be pleasant for me. If I had said — but I believe I am getting deeper and deeper into the mire every word I write in explanation.

Dear Lottie, don't think me an incorrigible criminal — don't imagine that I forget or am ignorant of the requirements of society, or am an habitual delinquent to propriety. I admit that I occasionally disregard punctilious etiquette, and do as I please, but it is not for the purpose of giving offence, or what is still worse, mortification. If you only knew half the number of lectures my dear sisters have given me, you would readily acquit me of blame, and say, "he couldn't help it." You will excuse me for writing again so soon, will you not, dear friend; for one situated as I am is apt to be a little impatient where he has so few pleasures.

But, Lottie, friend, I will now release your attention to my nothings. I trust I shall ere long hear from you, and in the meantime I promise to mend my ways and be a better man — and not write again until I — dare to! — *Au revoir,* farewell, or good-bye, dear Lottie, and remember me as

Affectionately yours,

CHALMERS

EDGE HILL, KING GEORGE CO., VA.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8th, 1863

DEAR FRIEND LOTTIE:

How I loved such days as this when a boy — How rejoiced I was when the long afternoon sermon, so prosy, and *ortho*doxy was completed, and I could escape from the confines of the church where my youthful eyes had first taken sly glances at all the pretty faces and then closed to be opened perhaps by my head coming in violent contact with the hard pine of the seat or pew in front, or by a no means gentle push from the Deacon's wife next to me, — to escape and wander at will "amid the vales and o'er the hills and by the romantic waters" of the dear old Pilgrim State. So still and lovely were those Sabbaths, that even nature partook of the solemnity with which the descendants of the Puritans observed the Holy Day. The gladsome twittering of the birds seemed subdued and less noisy, and the trees also spoke only in whispered sighings of the dear old past. How I loved to establish myself in the "Poet's Seat," away up on the top of a mountain, an

aerie for an eagle — where reared its tall form a single pine, whose tufted top had bowed to the storms of a century — to sit there and gaze upon the lovely vision before me, as the sinking sun gilded every object with a rich "glory." Pleasant villages, broad meadows, beautiful rivers, snow-covered mountains, and limitless forests, were encompassed within the view. A dark thick pine forest a mile to the left, tradition says, is where the Indians held their last council and perfected their plans, before the dreadful massacre of the people of Old Deerfield, during the old French War. And a little beyond is the modern Deerfield, quaint and odd, a memorial of the Past existing in the Present. Its majestic elms intertwine their branches over the one broad road, and shade the little antique cottages and the rich turf beneath. Look another way, and I could hear and see the "Singing Connecticut," see it as it was seen by the "Red Man" "who traversed its deep embowered shores, and whose cabin was filled with wild songs as its waters hurried over the everlasting granite in its course towards the distant sea." To the North, through the hazy atmosphere, the snow-capped mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire mingled with the fleecy clouds. Below and before me, in quiet silence rested the beautiful village of Greenfield, where, for many years, I lived and learned. Beyond the village the Green and Deerfield rivers wound their ways through meadows and vales, only to bestow their gathered waters into the bosom of the Connecticut, a mile below — All was lovely, all was calm, very, very beautiful, and a "Sabbath Sun" over all.

Dear Lottie, your kind letter of the 31st ult. was rec'd last evening, and I sat down to answer it — to tell you how pleased I was that you are willing to write to me often — Can you imagine how eagerly I seek for expressions of regard, for those dear assurances of esteem, that are the offerings of one heart to another? Oh, Lottie, I know I am very foolish, at times, — perhaps always — but when I read your letters, I blame the *chance* that has put it out of my power to know you better — to *see* you. And then, if I should see you, perhaps you would regret that our acquaintance ever had a beginning. And thus, sometimes, I am slightly discontented — wish my situation was different. But I know that it is not right to let inclination override my sense of duty — Man is not perfect, however, and that consoles me, for I would not be other than one with the many. — Not exactly that either, for I know you have already learned that in some things, I differ from the general run whenever I think fit, but what I would convey is that I do not wish to be *very* much *better* than people. I am no believer in perfection, except such perfection as is born with us, and that I consider conscience. I do not believe that conscience ever errs, therefore that, rather than education is the more proper guide.

I wish I had the power that Judge Edmonds, the Spiritualist, said he possessed, and could put it in force, though then I should not be satisfied. He claimed that, however great the distance, by the exercise of his will he could influence the thoughts of a person separated from him. If I was the fortunate possessor of such

a power, I know what "during the intervals of our correspondence" would be the tenor of your thoughts towards myself — The mesmeric influence, dear Lottie, I am fearful would never be abated, — but then, perhaps, if you were again to write this sentence: "There being a sufficient portion of it devoted to you, my friend, to prompt" &c, you would add one little word thus: *"All* my heart is not in my letters, there being a sufficient portion" *left* "devoted to you" &c. For then, indeed, you would account for the *whole* of it. — That's a queer science, mesmerism, and what a curious world this would be if it was generally in practice: the strongest wills would control the whole. I don't think it would be for the good of society at large, or would make life half so interesting or amusing, for then — we could not witness the daily contests between mind and mind, the powerful effort of one to subdue the still more powerful strength of another — we could not laugh then at the manoeuverings of a weak mind to obtain advantages over a strong, out-spoken one. In fact, we could think of nothing and feel sure we were enjoying the "inalienable privilege" of compelling others to say "a penny for your thoughts," — for they wouldn't be ours, perhaps, and might belong to the speaker. If I could alone possess the power, however, I don't think I should give it away, and you, dear Lottie, would be sorely affected, may-be.

We are having splendid nights for sleigh-rides, skating parties &c, if there were *snow* and *ice* — I have not seen a sleigh for two years — one in motion. Your winter in Williamsville must indeed be dull and

slow, denied the only things which make cold weather endurable. I would like to transfer our Virginia snow and its glittering companions to grace a sleigh ride North. Of course, you have such articles as moon and stars in Yankeeland, but here they shine with a brighter light, — apparently. I don't know why they should unless it be that to recompense the South for Nature's neglect of it in favor of the North, the heavens generously & kindly endeavor to soothe its wounded pride by bestowing upon it a larger share of its beauty! This I think is the true condition of things, but some here are egotistical enough to assert that it is because the superior beauty of this section reflects upwards, enhancing the brilliancy and lustre of other worlds. It may be so, but I "fail to see it." If there was snow in Williamsville, and I was there, too, "Mr. Ingersoll's compliments, and will Miss Rinewalt favor," &c, would be a document soon in existence. Would it be of any avail — would a few hours glide away with the jingle of bells, or would Mr. Ingersoll, as others have done before him, spend the evening sullenly, and swearing by all the oaths of disappointment and all that, which people do, when they have obtained an enlarged "edition" (in one volume) of that interesting work called "A Mitten" — I have been told that is a veritable "circulating library" in the "rural sections."

I am only afraid that my *long* letters will weary you and become uninteresting. I love to write to you, dear Lottie, for it is by that means only I can receive your letters, otherwise my naturally indolent nature would not accede to the many demands I make

upon it — But you will appreciate, I trust, and understand the restraint my heart and my pen labor under. I do not wish ever to write a line that will offend or pain, — and but so lately, dear friend, I nearly gave you, perhaps just cause for — for — what shall I say? I do not like the word "offence" — Will you please supply the word — I can well repeat the words you write, for, indeed, many are the *very* kind thoughts you receive, which are never penned — You will grant me this privilege, will you not, Lottie?

I think it very uncertain about George's visiting his friends in Williamsville. It is difficult to obtain furloughs in this army. I thank you sincerely for your desire to see me; for I am confident that that desire is not prompted solely by curiosity — It is possible, but not probable, that either Lieut. or myself can obtain a leave of absence. Perhaps — thought at first I would not mention it, but on reflection concluded to act according to *propriety* — and Lottie, you must not mention it to any of George's friends — perhaps, we will both be able to make a short visit either in March or April. I have a furlough *promised* me, Lieut. I think has one, too, *promised*. But promises in the army don't amount to much. You will please say nothing of this, as it is George's desire, I believe, to surprise his people as to the time. —

"The end draws near," and "the day of rejoicing is dawning." This letter must end, or I shall bewail its effects. I shall always look, Lottie, for your letters with impatience. But I do not wish for more of your time than is freely, willingly given me. Trusting that as

bright and beautiful a day has blessed you in your Northern home, as has given joy to all in the army, I bid you *adieu* reluctantly.

Accept, *dear Lottie,* assurances of my regard and love.

Affectionately,

CHALMERS

NEAR STAFFORD COURT HOUSE, VA.
FEBRUARY 21st, 1863

DEAR LOTTIE FRIEND:

Yours of the 14th was received this morning, and as I may not have another opportunity soon I answer to-night, — and, besides, it is a pleasure to write to you. Permit me to sympathize with you in your present grief, hoping, however, that it will be but temporary, — "a cloud, passing quickly." How gladly, were it in my power, would I assuage your sorrows, dear Lottie, and cheer your spirits with the attentions and kindnesses that sincere friends only can give. But I am powerless, and can assure you of my sympathy and affection.

Since I wrote you last our location has been changed, and our pleasant life of the last two months contrasts unpleasantly with the present. Once more we have come to "soldiers' fare" — hard bread and pork have been substituted for biscuits and fowls, and beautiful weather for mud and rain and snow — The past week has been the most unpleasant in the service. On Tuesday last we were relieved at Edge Hill and pro-

ceeded to King George C. H. and camped for the night in the woods. When we spread our blankets the stars were twinkling gayly, and everything betokened a calm, pleasant night. But alas! we awoke in the morning with several inches of snow on our blankets, and the water running maliciously through our beds, seeming highly pleased that we were made decidedly uncomfortable by its familiarity. Daylight ushered in the worst storm of the season. After a miserable breakfast, we started for Belle Plains, and a tedious time we had indeed. The cold sleet drove mercilessly against our faces, the horses floundered knee deep through the mud, neighing piteously as the fierce winds blew full against them — and thoroughly drenched, chilled and in bad-temper we reached Belle Plains late in the afternoon. Scraping the deep snow from a spot of ground, we spread our blankets, and built a fire which partially dried them and ourselves, and thus "retired." In the morning we were again on the march, the storm of the previous day having changed to one wholly of rain. The roads were almost impassable, — they were so to everything but Cavalry. The only *amusement* we had that day was *laughing* at the poor unfortunates who were unlucky enough to get a tumble into the mud — and there were many. There is nothing very pleasant I admit to such a mishap but there is much that is very ludicrous, and a soldier never fails to laugh at another's ridiculous misfortunes, and as retributive justice is meted out in this life, accounts are pretty evenly balanced, for the *laugher* of one day is the *laughed-at* of the next. That night my poncho was spread in three inches of mud,

but with a grand fire all night, we managed to pass the night. The next day we built a "home," and *to-night* are happy in the possession of an *edifice* if not aristocratic at least comfortable for a soldier — For five long days we had no mail, — and yesterday I almost had an attack of the "bluedevils." I expected a letter from Lottie — I thought I deserved some remuneration for the trials I had borne so "manfully," and the reward I wished was a letter from you — Looking at your likeness failed of the desired effect. — I had made up my mind that it was a *letter* I wished, and nothing else would satisfy me. And to-day the letter *did* reach me, — and doubly dear was it to me when I learned that you had stolen a few moments from her to whom you owe all, to give to me — Dear Lottie, you must not consider me foolish because the non-arrival of an expected letter has the power to influence me. I, in common with others, have so little to assist me in passing away the time, when "off duty" — that *thought* assumes too absolute a sway, and *wishes* and *hopes* flit about in the mind like "bats in a dark insect infested cavern" — coming and going, coming and going, through the livelong day, and often-times deep into the night —

It is almost an impossibility for me to write a letter on one sheet of paper. I don't know why, unless it is that I have not yet learned to end a letter prettily. But I have an idea that it is a lingering desire to prolong the seeming conversation with you — the natural hesitancy to say "farewell" — Ah, Lottie dear, what a poor possession is an active imagination! What sad tricks it plays off on a poor fellow! If I should tell you

a hundredth portion of them, you would think I was certainly "loony" — A perfect pandemonium reigns about me. Talking, laughing and singing sadly confuse my mind to-night. It is "Ingersoll, do you think McClellan was a *traitor?*" — "Ingersoll, did you ever hear Patti?" "Ingersoll, will you trade horses?" "Ingersoll, do you believe the *Bible?*" "Ingersoll," "Ingersoll" — and so on — and they won't keep quiet. From "gay to grave" the conversation ranges — now discussing topics of great political importance, the fine arts, and then some ridiculous subject, some quibble, or wretched pun, attract their attention, and to some "sweetly sentimental" song they improvise a ridiculous negro chorus. 'Tis worse than a village sewing circle, worse than a "Babel" — You must pardon me, dear Lottie, for choosing so unfavorable a moment to write to you —

I trust, Lottie, that you will be able to write me often, — that ere this reaches you your duty to your mother has permitted you to write me again — This time you must excuse my letter, — for I have attempted to write amid so much confusion and noise, that I have need of your kind leniency.

I will not try to write more. Pleasant thoughts of you are always with me, and hopes that you may have no continued cause for sorrow. — Accept my dearest regards, and a reluctant good night.

Affectionately and sincerely,

Yours —

CHALMERS

MARCH 1st, 1863

MY DEAR FRIEND:

It is with a happy heart that I seat myself this evening to write to you. I have only one regret and that is that I have not been able to write sooner. But now that my dear mother has so far recovered as to relieve me from anxious care, I propose if possible to "balance accounts" with you, dear friend. I am *very very* thankful, and feelings of profound gratitude to *Him* who has so kindly heard and answered prayers, fill my heart and soul tonight.

Who can tell the anxiety of mind and anguish of heart that the sickness of a dear Mother occasions except those whom bitter experience has taught, and now that the clouds of darkness have passed away and I see again the dawn of brightness, have I not every reason to be very happy? Your dear letter of the 21st was received Friday evening and I need not assure you that it was gladly welcomed, nor tell you that it added much to my happiness, for you are aware of all *that,* but I was not pleased to learn that you had changed your pleasant location to one so decidedly unpleasant. No, *dear* Chalmers, I would that you might experience

none of the ills and inconveniences of this *War,* but all the pleasures and benefits (if there are any). In your letter of the 8th you speak of your early home — of your boyhood days and the enjoyments of those days. I love to read the description you give, it seems so *honest and good.* Who does not love to revert to early scenes — to days of childhood, when we knew no care or sorrow — and when the little disappointments and troubles that then darkened our vision and clouded our minds, only lived to be kissed away by the gentle, sympathizing words of a fond mother, or dispelled by the kind counsels of an indulgent father. Ah! those were happy days, the remembrance of which will ever live, no human power can efface it. But time passes swiftly, childhood days are soon over and ere we are aware we are drifting out upon the broad sea of life, unwitting and unconscious, and we but too soon find that the bright anticipations and golden fancies of youthful days, are but mere paintings in the air. Cold experience teaches us that life presents many difficulties with which we must contend, many obstacles are placed in the way of our advancement. Ah! yes, we may mark out some noble work and that too which we are wholly able to perform, but the realization of which we never reach, for ere we have hardly made an attempt, we are checked by the scorn and hatred of the multitude who are ever ready to judge our actions and I had almost said our thoughts. There never was a time when man was indifferent to the world's opinion and there are and always have been men enough who are willing to place themselves as judges of their fellows. What the world calls justice

may find a place as one of the attributes of this fraternity. But the justice which Heaven recognizes tempered with mercy, we might almost say has taken its flight to more congenial scenes. The weaker and more defenceless the offender, then the better aim is he for this council of *wise judges,* and indeed he is held spellbound as it were, never rising to any distinction and all for the influence that the world throws about him. Oh! I cannot but wish for a time when sensitiveness to the world's opinion shall not prevent accomplishment of that which would make the world wiser and better. But I must get out of this train, you will undoubtedly think I am getting "serious."

You referred to the splendid nights you were having in Virginia for sleigh rides skating parties &c providing there were snow and ice. Now dear Chalmers we are favored with both these in this locality, and shall I say if Mr. Ingersoll were only here the programme for an evening's entertainment would be complete. Need I tell you that I hardly think you would be fortunate enough to secure that interesting book (in one volume) of which you made mention, and which "they say" is so widely circulated in the *rural sections.* My friend, nothing could give me so much pleasure as to see you, but I must content myself for the present I suppose with your letters. I do *love* to hear from you and I have one request to make, — it is that you rid yourself of the restraint your "heart and pen" labor under and express yourself frankly and freely. I am very ready to supply the word you wish in reference to your manner in a letter received some time since. I assure you it is

not "offense" but rather surprise. I was really pleased with your last letter, and I could not suppress a really good laugh (I am wholly capable of it) when I read of the confusion amid which you wrote, and a desire involuntarily arose, to know in what manner "Mr. Ingersoll" would have answered the questions that were offered if he had felt so disposed, the first and last in particular. Such a desire may have been very foolish but "I couldn't help it."

I await your letters impatiently. Do write often dear Chalmers. Accept the dearest wishes and lasting regards of your sincere and affectionate friend

LOTTIE

STAFFORD, VIRGINIA
MARCH 10th, 1863

DEAR LOTTIE:

Thrice blessed is the giver." I have read this somewhere. If so, you, dear Lottie, must be very happy, and your days very peaceful — for you have given me great happiness — The discontent and yearning that have so disquieted me, are gone, and the joyful calm of assurance, hope and anticipation, is mine — Why should it not be so? You have given me permission to remove the check from my thoughts, to displace the *clog* from my pen, — that both may hereafter and forever free — free and untrammeled. That I may brighten the hours of duty with thoughts of you, of your esteem — may I not say, your love — and may write to you knowing that if you chide me for my sentiments, you will do so gently and affectionately. And I have the dear assurance, dearest friend, that sometimes I am in your thoughts a welcome if not a loved visitor. If you knew how mighty you have become in my heart and soul, how supreme is your sway and how potent your influence over my thoughts you would appreciate the happiness your last letter gave me. Why should it not give me

happiness, when love had long since usurped more friendly sentiments? I trust not an unreasoning and silly love, but a love lasting, deep and eternal — I do not think we are strangers — certainly not to each other's thoughts — and so long as our spiritual acquaintance continues and increases, and develops under the influence of appreciation and mutual sentiments and hopes, can we not wait patiently the period that shall give us "more tangible shape" in the eyes of each other?

A *soldier,* dearest Lottie, must have his *idol* — an earthly shrine that he may worship at in secret and at all times. Absence increases his devotion, his thoughts always linger about his loved one, and his dreams are often bright with her loved form. The Moslem prostrates himself toward his adored Mecca, though immeasurable distance veils to him the glistening of the minarets of the holy temple — so does the soldier, who, loving passionately and devotedly, consecrate his soul worship to his idol — the distance separating him from her serving to intensify his passion, and purify his love. — A soldier has so much time to weave beautiful fabrics from the future, and build Aladdin-palaces that rival in delicacy of structure and beauty of design the handiwork of all the Genii, wherein to enthrone the mistress of his soul. No morbid sentiments are the consequence of this dreaming — our pictures of fancy serve their purpose and are then dissipated like the "baseless fabrics of a dream" that they are. I cannot repress the desire, when thinking of you, to be able to say "Two minds with but a single thought, two hearts

that beat as one" — May I not dream on? Live within myself a bright, pure life, that shall know no cloud nor storm, — a life of unalloyed love? Dearest Lottie, I know you will not deny me this. But the light would be more glorious, if I knew that occasionally you thought of me in your hours of solitude, — that I had the power to tinge your heart picture with a more vivid coloring, and that my love was accepted and treasured above all others. I have written "frankly" and sincerely, — for I had your kind permission, and because I thought I discovered in your letter that I was not wholly unthought of by you — that perhaps you might be gratified with the knowledge that the graces of your mind and heart had taken me captive — a willing prisoner, bound with golden bonds — Don't refuse me the liberty to love you, Lottie dearest and always remember me kindly, if not with love —

It gladdened me to learn that you were relieved from the suspense and anxiety induced by your mother's illness, and I hope that it will be long ere you are again called upon to undergo the trials attendant upon the illness of dear friends and relations. So little have I known of sickness during my life that I can hardly realize the meaning of the word — certainly not its sufferings — To me it is synonymous with something terrible, some painful ordeal that almost inevitably produces fatal results — I remember when my father died. I was then a little fellow of eleven, and though I had before seen sickness, I did not understand its terrible significance — that the "coming event casts its dark shadow before." I could not understand why they

all wept — so peacefully and quietly did father pass from this life — to life eternal — I had so early been taught — that to die was to pass from earth to bright happy heaven, — that I wondered mother should weep so bitterly, when what was her loss was his everlasting gain. I know now what death is — too well do I know it, and know that an illness may herald its approach — I joy with you that your mother is now able to dispense with your constant care and solicitude.

It is very stormy here today — snow and rain — and we have to go on picket to-morrow in the neighborhood of Dumfries. The rebels manage to create a disturbance or alarm in that direction nearly every day — and so we have at last got to go out and investigate the matter. We naturally enough feel slightly proud to be the guardians of the army in important places, but just now would prefer quiet and indolence in camp. On the 27th ult. we began a scout of three days through the deepest mud and heaviest rain we have ever experienced. During the three days no rebel had the temerity to show himself to our "optics," and what was worse the poor horses can say that during that time no grain gladdened their eyes with the "pleasures of hope" — We are having considerable sport just now with our "mools" (mules). Gen Stoneman, to render the cavalry more efficient, has taken the wagons away and supplied their places with mules — pack-mules — and they have been distributed throughout this Division in the ratio of one mule to ten men. Company G has seven and an equal number of men have been detailed to "attend upon their wants" Each one of these men have had

their names *decorated* with an "M.D." (mule driver) and are the object at which we cast all our wit, ridicule and jokes. Of course they resent it, and so continue their own torture and our amusement. One young man, who is in my mess, — and who, previous to the war, was what is known as a "gentleman of some means," was one of the detailed — His anger is unbounded and our sport is in proportion. He and the mule have failed to join the Mutual Admiration Society, and therefore no affinity has yet developed itself — While the "mool" "ee-haws," F——— stands off beyond the reach of his asinine lordship and vents his anger in murderous looks, language failing to do justice to his feelings. Kindness fails to soften the heart (and feet) of the beast, and tender words don't lessen its y-eas. Though the ground was muddy yesterday I was compelled to "subside" and "conglomerate" into it when F. attempted to mount him. For a long time there was a struggle to see whose foot should have the stirrup — F.'s or the mule's. F. succeeded in that and was instantly astride the saddle, but immediately found a receptacle for his body in a convenient brush heap several yards "to the front," much to the astonishment of his mule, if judging from its innocent appearance. We must have something to laugh at, and another's troubles are the fittest subject for mirth in the army — Ridicule approaches perfection here. — The most sacred as well as the most ridiculous sentiments and actions must run the gauntlet of sarcasm and no one escapes without first receiving some blows that *tell.* The effects of this custom are excellent — One learns to conceal his sentiments from

public scrutiny — to exercise self-control, and as well, he soon finds out that none but fools hang up their hearts on twigs that every jackdaw may peck at them. Aspirations and ambitions should never be discovered to those about the camp-fire, — for some wit will be sure to give them death blows. The unfortunate who is innocent enough to seek *confidential* friends, soon writhes under the lash of sarcasm that his confiding nature has invited. The quickest at repartee is the most feared and has the most enemies, but he enjoys the consciousness of power — and some take great enjoyment from that.

If I could remember the *order* of the questions I wrote last, I would readily satisfy your desire to have the answers I could have given. The last I think was do I believe the Bible? I certainly *do* — I was baptized and brought up in the Presbyterian faith, though I confess my fears that the teachings of my youth have not yielded much fruit — and that I have wandered very far from the right path as pointed out by the *Presbyterian* creed and doctrine. The others I have forgotten — forgotten which was first. — I do not think it necessary to be of any particular faith to believe in the truth of the Bible —

You will not think me egotistical if I give you a "word painting" description of my character and disposition, — I think I owe it to you, that you should know me as far as possible — I am quick-tempered — but my anger soon passes away — like many others — I like fun, a great deal of it — but in its place. And I am afraid I like my own way much better than any other.

— Seldom have the "blues" — and above all don't "borrow trouble," it being my motto to "take care of to-day" and "letting to-morrow take care of itself" — There is one other rule, I fear, I have engrafted into my principles of life — not very commendable but much practiced. "As others do unto you, do you also unto them." — These are a few of my characteristics. Others, I cannot tell even myself — for then I could explain the mystery of life — with philosophical pedantry.

Lottie dear, I have permitted myself to write as I think, have permitted myself to tell you that you are always remembered with a love grown from our long "acquaintance" — that thoughts of you have made pleasant many a lone sentinel post this long winter, and have cheered the heart of the solitary sentinel. Your letters have been precious to me, for I imagined that you were not wholly indifferent to me, and one *does* so love to *be loved* — If I have again transgressed, dearest friend — it shall be my last transgression. But if otherwise, will you not give me the dear assurance that some day, if not *now,* you will give me your tenderest regard. I have been frank, very frank — will you give me your confidence as I have confided in you?

Write *very* often, my dear Lottie, if it is convenient. May I hope no *week* will ever pass without bringing me at least *one* letter from you — One every *day* would not satisfy me. I *do* accept the "dearest wishes and regards" (but I shall omit the word *"friend"*) of my "affectionate Lottie" — Will you accept the dearest regards and *love* of *your* affectionate and sincere

CHALMERS

March 11th. — Dearest Lottie, I am almost ashamed to send this, after a night's consideration. I have so signally failed to express myself, that I am ready to believe with that French gentleman that "language is to conceal and disguise thoughts." But you will judge leniently, I trust, believing always that I love you, and that I have enshrined your dear self as the object of my earthly worship — I kiss you good-bye.

CHALMERS

MARCH 26th, 1863

DEAR CHALMERS:

Your *dear good* letter of the 10th inst. now lies before me and shall I assure you that I am very happy in its possession — that it has been read and re-read with that real pleasure which your letters alone afford me. Yes dear friend, if you could know half the happiness that your last letter gave me, you would certainly feel the truth of the sentiment — "Thrice blessed is the giver." I little knew ere I received your last letter, that I was so kindly remembered and tenderly regarded by you, dearest Chalmers and although I had learned to think of you always with kindness and esteem I had never thought that our friendship had ripened into *love* — a love "deep earnest and eternal." I needed not the *assurance* however of your sincere and lasting devotion to teach me that "two minds with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one," is a beautiful illustration of the "unknown friends." I still say "unknown" although I know we are no longer strangers to each other's thoughts but until the time when we shall have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance we

may truly answer to that title, for may I not hope that the time is not far distant when we can say "unknown" *no more*. Now more than ever do I long to see you, my dear Chalmers, and I fear my patience will scarcely meet the demands of time.

Dear Chalmers, when you confess a *love* for me that fills you with bright hopes and anticipations, rendering your thoughts pure and good — your actions worthy, and cheering your sad and lonely hours, you awaken in me a *sympathy* and *love* that outlasts the fleeting moments consumed in assuring you of it, a love that the grave of recollection alone can destroy. My thoughts are ever of you dear Chalmers and may the light of that bright pure life that now radiates within you, be more glorious, shedding a divine influence on all. For let me assure you that the love you bear me is accepted and treasured *above all others.* I have confided in you as you requested and because I believed my confidence would not be betrayed and I have been very *frank and honest* — let this ever characterize our correspondence.

It has been very stormy here for the past week, rain and snow together with "mud slush and *sich*" have made all around very unpleasant. Our little village is usually dull, my only enjoyment, I was going to say my chief enjoyment is in the reception of your kind letters, in them I find comfort, and I would they might be more frequent. I hear too quite often from my dear sister in California. In one of her letters she said present my compliments to friend Chalmers, she has not forgotten *my* friend.

I thank you for the description you gave of your character and disposition. Shall I "retaliate" by giving a "word or two" in regard to *my* disposition? I am not very quick-tempered. Like yourself I seldom ever have the "blues," and don't "borrow trouble" but I *do* like my own way pretty well. I am lively and quite particular, but not old maidish as "they say."

Now there is one thing more in reference to your *own dear self* that I have quite a curiosity to know, as it has been the subject of some dispute among my friends. *It is your age.* Judging from your photograph you have been called almost every age from sixteen to twenty five. A desire to settle the question in my own mind prompted me to ask it. It may seem very saucy, *if so forgive it.*

Dear Chalmers, your letters are very dear to me although far from satisfactory.

I hope to hear very soon from you, and with the dear assurance that you love me sincerely and devotedly, I assure you of the *tenderest regard* and love of your sincere and affectionate

LOTTIE

NEAR STAFFORD C.H. VA.
APRIL 9th, 1863

DEAREST LOTTIE:

Your letter of the 26th ult. has been received several days. I should have answered immediately if I had had leisure. My time has all been taken up making up the returns of our late Regimental Quartermaster. You will pardon my delay, will you not? for if I have not *written,* you have received all my thoughts — you, *my* Lottie, have reigned supreme in my heart. I cannot tell you in words the joy your letter gave me. Had it been possible, I would have sought your presence that you might know how dear your words were to me. Anxious and doubtful, I had awaited your letter with impatience, — the letter that was to bind our friendship with a stronger chain, or to forbid the utterance and check the growth of the sentiments of a heart wholly and unreservedly devoted to you — I have loved you long, — not a love, dearest, that is born of earth and passion, — but for the beauties and goodness of your mind, for the graces that intelligence always im-

parts. Your letters have been to me an unfailing source of happiness; I have hoarded them as a miser does his treasure, — always crying for more. Thoughts of you have illumined the hard and dreary days of to-day and brightened the future with a radiance that reflects upon all my actions and aspirations. I have loved you, and loving, wished to be loved. Have you never read, darling, of the wretched prisoner, who, shut out from the light of the glorious sun for long and weary months, prayed his merciless gaolers for a single hour to bask in the golden light, that had so long been a thing of memory only. His prayer was granted, but alas, his eyes so long familiar with darkness, were blinded by the glare, and he saw not, but he *felt* the light, his soul was filled with its subtle power, his spirit was ravished, his whole being intoxicated by the permeating refulgence he could not see — and he was led back to his dungeon a new man, a contented and happy prisoner. I thought of this little story Lottie, when I wished for words to convey to you the influence your loving words have had upon me. Though I can not see and adore the image, I feel its power, your love, as did the poor prisoner the light of the sun.

The confidence you have reposed in me, *"my Lottie,"* shall be unto me a holy trust, a sacred thing. It shall dwell in the "Inner Temple" as the "holy of holies" — influencing all my thoughts and directing all my actions towards the accomplishment of one object: The continuance of your love, and keeping me worthy of it. Oh I would have you love like the mountain torrent, — strongly, expressing your affection in words that

shall thrill me with unbounded happiness. Tell me every day that I hold a place in your heart, that for me *alone* you write the sweet whisperings of love. Love me with all your heart, for, indeed, you have all of mine.

Were it possible I would hasten to your side, that I might hear the confirmation of my happiness from your dear lips. But, for the present we must remain *soul*-lovers. And I would have it so, for if it is my lot to fall in this struggle ere you and I have met, ere by "word of mouth" we have told each other the desires of our hearts, ere we have "looked love into eyes that look love again," or ere, dearest, the soldier has circled with his strong arms her whom he cherishes amid all the dangers of terrible war, — for then the recollection of my love will be a hallowed thing in your heart, a pleasant dream of other days, that will be reverted to without a single shade of regret, or a single pang of sorrow —

I had always thought I told you my age when I sent you my Photograph — As I did not, allow me the privilege of asserting, that I may correct any "erroneous impressions upon your mind" (polite literature) that it was not because I was ashamed of it. Of course you permit me to ask the same question, even if that is a question which "they say" should never be addressed to a lady. I am *twenty-four* years old — thanks to Providence and "full rations." Shall be twenty-five, the 29th day of October next. And one other remark dear Lottie, which perhaps I should have written long ago, but never thought of it until very lately, — I don't know how to write it now, but will. If you are in the least un-

certain as to my status in society, I desire you to seek information of Lieut. Warner. I have written it in as few words as possible, and perfectly frank. You will accept it as such, for I think it the best method to get rid of a difficulty.

The "premonitory symptoms" of the Campaign are exhibiting themselves in great abundance, Judging from present appearances if the coming Campaign lacks success it will not lack vigor or determination, for everything is being got ready for a decisive struggle — a decisive victory or a terrible defeat to our army. We all know that Gen. Hooker is a fighting man, but though he himself appears confident of success, we do not permit ourselves to be sanguine of the same result. The most sanguine temperament in our army last Spring, is now the reverse. A wonderful physiological fact, to be sure, but General George B. McClellan was a wonderful General, and knew a thing or two, he did, or else he would not be fit to electioneer for the next Presidency among the Sabbath Schools of New England nor buy Onion Seed of the Connecticut Shakers! The President reviewed the Cavalry of this army three days ago. There were 28 regiments and five batteries of Flying Artillery, — every man mounted. I think it was the first time the President ever had a definite idea about Cavalry. The *late* widow of Stephen A. Douglas honored us by being present, and to tell the truth I am afraid she was more the "observed of all observers" than the Public Functionary. But a lady is a rarity in the army, and the men all have a lingering "liking" for the traditions of the Past.

I do not know whether you will be able to decipher this letter or not the ink is so miserably poor. I trust you will however and receive my words with as much kindness as the heart that prompts them wishes them received. Am I asking too much, when I express a desire to hear from you as often as once a week? If convenient, it would add greatly to my happiness. Lottie you have made me happy, you have quieted the spirit of unrest and discontent that has haunted me, you have imbued my heart with new life and the life with new ambitions, you have generously given me assurances of your *true* love, you have frankly confided in my honor. I cannot thank you — all I can do is to *love* you as a *man* loves. May I not call you "my darling," I *must* say "darling" for that only expresses my love.

Dearest Lottie, I kiss you good-night, and remember me as

Ever your lover

CHALMERS

WILLIAMS VILLE

MAY 7th, 1863*

DEAREST CHALMERS:

I am alone tonight — all alone, and as ever my thoughts are of you. Oh! how much I wish you were with me. Must I give up all thoughts of seeing you this spring or the coming summer? Can it be possible that this pleasure is to be denied me? Were you here, *dear* Chalmers, I might unburthen my heart, and say to you that which I dare not write. I received your last *dear letter* three weeks ago, and endeavored to answer immediately, but *could not,* for I dared not write as my heart would dictate, and although I have given you my best love and confidence, I cannot express myself fully and freely. It is for this reason that I have deferred writing, hoping that time would work a change upon my feelings, but I have waited in vain, and as I can no longer endure the thoughts of my indebtedness to you I shall write, for by this means only I can receive that

* This is but a fragment of my mother's letter.

for which I continually sigh — your dear letters and the assurance of your tenderest love.

Dear Chalmers will you not forgive me this delay, and look graciously upon the cause? for if you have received no word from me you have received all my thoughts, in imagination you are ever near me, prompting many happy thoughts, and making glad the sad and lonely hours of my life and to you *alone* are given love's secret whisperings. The goodness of your heart, dearest — the power of your mind, and the sincerity and honesty which I believe characterize your thoughts towards me, have awakened feelings of admiration and love, that until now were never known.

Hitherto my life has been one uninterrupted round of contentment and peace. I have never known a sorrow that was not dispelled by the gentle words of a dear sympathizing mother, nor a regret that her kind smiles have not banished. In her alone I have confided, nor is it without wonder that I find myself reposing confidence in another, one whom I have never seen yet love and trust, my earnest prayer is that that love may never be betrayed.

I was somewhat surprised in reading your last letter to learn your age. I had never thought you were so advanced in years, yet had hoped as much. [We are to take no heed of "they say" in our future correspondence]. As I have no regard for "they say" in this particular I kindly accept your question, and readily reply I was twenty-one the 25th day of last month (April).

BROOK'S STATION, VA.
MAY 14th, 1863

LOTTIE DEAREST:

Your letter of the 7th inst. was received yesterday and as for several weeks you have denied me the pleasure of your letters, its arrival was hailed with more than a *glad* welcome. I cannot disguise the fact to myself and will not to you, that dear Lottie's kind missives are a "wellspring" of happiness to me, from which I continually draw contentment, and in its depths trace many a "castle," with a light mightier than the sun's to illumine the scene. I was in a condition yesterday to appreciate the kind letters of my dearest friend, — of my Lottie, — as for the first time since entering the service I was compelled to own myself "dead beat." So constantly had we been on the move day and night for the three weeks previous, that when we reached Camp, I was not the only one that threw himself upon the ground, and instantly fell asleep — a sleep which would not be broken until exhausted nature was in some degree refreshed. And now, with a severe cold upon me,

— the effects of being *four* days without a dry garment, you will admit that I must feel more in a condition to read letters than to write them, and that *your* letters, above all others, are the ones my heart longs for and my love demands.

Gen. Hooker made a grand effort to wrest "Victory" from the banners that have hitherto always flaunted triumphantly before the eyes of our army of the Potomac. There was not, however, a *general* battle fought. We gained positions from which a battle might have been given if deemed best. From these positions the enemy endeavored to drive us, but in every instance save one completely failed, and there the number of rebel dead attest the fearful price they paid for their success. Sedgwick alone was forced to yield up the ground he had won. On the right of our army, at Chancellorsville the rebels made repeated efforts to drive us into the river, but were always repulsed. At one time they massed their troops ten lines deep and charged our position. Our men awaited their approach silently until they got within a hundred yards, and then opened upon them with musketry. After two or three volleys, which did not check the progress of the charging and shouting rebels, our men threw themselves on to their faces and *thirty-six* pieces of artillery sent their contents of cannister over them and into the very midst of the foe. No men can stand such a terrible fire. They wavered, — another discharge, and they were on the retreat, with our artillery making great gaps in the fleeing mass. But Gen. Hooker considered it policy to retire from that side of the river,

and unmolested gained this bank of the Rappahannock. Whatever, Lottie, people may say "up North," we have not been whipped. The whole army look upon their performances with satisfaction, and are perfectly willing to again attack the rebels whenever Gen. Hooker orders them. One thing has been demonstrated: We now have a commander who is not *afraid;* one who superintends the movements and orders on the *battle-field,* neither trusting in telegraphs and balloons, nor taking refuge on iron clads. As usual Cavalry could not be used during the various engagements though we were near and ready if called upon, having ridden thirty miles without resting to be there. To show you how completely the rebels were in the dark as to Gen. Hooker's real intentions, I must refer to *our* movements. When our Brigade crossed at Kelly's Ford late in the afternoon, two corps of infantry and two Divisions of Cavalry had preceded us several hours, and were on the march for their several destinations, moving in a southerly direction. We went west, and had not gone *half a mile* ere we met the rebel cavalry with artillery. As a matter of course we drove them before us, taking some prisoners, from whom we learned that the force we had defeated had been ordered from "Culpepper to Kelly's Ford to hold it against us, as Gen. Hooker was making demonstrations to cross," and they were rather surprised to find themselves confronted by our Brigade before they had reached the Ford. We didn't inform them that forty or fifty thousand were already some miles from the river, on their side.

When I commenced writing I had no intention of occupying so much of your time. I begin to think I am addicted to the almost universal habit of soldiers, garrulousness. What trials of patience await you and every one who is compelled to stay at home. What dissimulation you must learn to practice in the future, when this war is over, and the soldiers who survive have returned home. Each one of them will have his interminable stories to tell, — they will all be veritable Pashas with many Tales — and how she will be lacking in patriotism who does not listen attentively, with every mark of interest and astonishment, of sorrow and joy, which the features of the story demand of the features of the *face*. Wouldn't it be a good idea, Lottie mavourneen, for you to practice raising the eyebrows, exclaiming "Oh!" with the various modulations of voice that will be necessary, and above all, acquire, if it be possible, the art of making "each hair to stand on end like the quills upon the fretful porcupine," so that, when necessary, the narrator of "hairbreadth 'scapes and wonderful adventures" will be certain that you appreciate the *story,* if not the teller. As so many of the troops of your State are being discharged, their two years having expired, perhaps my advice will come too late to be of benefit to you, but it will be an admirable accomplishment for the older "veterans" a year hence!

While loitering for an hour in the streets of Culpepper about two weeks ago I was guilty of stealing, or "feloniously abstracting" that, which for the time gave me much pleasure. It was the *music* of a piano.

I hid myself behind a large tree near the house containing the instrument and performer, and for an hour listened as only one can who has been deprived so long of what he has once been familiar with and taken delight in. I love music, as I believe nearly all do who know nothing about it. I have "no ear" for it, but, as Monsieur X (or some other mons.) replied to a lady who upbraided him for having "no ear for music," "I have a *soul* for it, Madame." When the unseen performer played an old well remembered waltz, I could hardly restrain myself from doing the same thing I did the last time I heard the same tune — put my hand in my pocket and then toss a "quarter" to the musician. But when that was done, I was in Alexandria and the musician was an organ-grinder! You needn't laugh because I call an organ-grinder a musician, for in my estimation the "extractor of sweet sounds" is such, let him be a "performer" upon anything from a pumpkin-vine flute to the Cathedral organ, including corn stalk violins and Calliope. Some people insist that there is music in the crying of *frogs,* but as they called me names not long since, I do not favor the proposition. Some time ago we encamped, after a long ride, where there was scarcely any water, and what there was had long been pre-empted by the frogs. I must have my coffee, however, and after considerable reluctance filled my cup with such water as was near, and when I turned to leave the *frogs* called out "You old thief!" "Take all our water!" "Confound you — you — y-o-u-u-ugh!" I had a very good dish for a Frenchman, when my coffee was boiled, but owing to circumstances I *"parley-voued"* it.

Yes, Lottie mine, you must give up the idea of seeing me this summer, and I must give up the hope of seeing you, of hearing you *speak* the words you have written, of knowing, dearest friend, that you are indeed wholly, entirely my own. "Were you here!" Oh dear Lottie, if I could only be with you for even an hour! Then perhaps, the *fear* which now fetters your pen would be removed, and you would give me unreservedly all that my heart yearns for. Then, perhaps, we could say with "Claude" "We'll have no friends that are not lovers, we'll read no books that are not tales of love, and smile to see how poorly the eloquence of words translates the poetry of hearts like ours." And I would prove to you that all your fears and doubts are baseless, so that what your heart should dictate you would freely and confidingly utter. This I had hoped for this summer, but now another Campaign stands between us. I shall love on and on, until I am free to go and come as I list. Then, dear one, shall I hasten to you, and usher from the world forever the "Unknown *Lovers.*" Will you not, dear Lottie, — and I know you will — still keep for me the sanctuary of your heart, still in the musings of solitude remember him who is impatiently waiting the time when he can hold you to him with the assurance that it has been no alluring will o' the wisp that has so long dazzled before and led him on.

I waited long for an answer to my last. I will not deny that I waited impatiently. I finally concluded that either you declined writing again, or that your letter had gone astray, and was undecided whether to

write to you or not. Many a night within the past month have I thrown myself upon the ground, my horse ready saddled and tied to my arm, with the enemy in our front not a hundred rods, and with a kind thought for Lottie, my "darling," and no "thoughts of the morrow" sank into profound slumber. I would not permit myself to dwell upon the thought that I had given you offence, but preferred to believe that every cloud has its silver lining. Yes, Lottie dear, I can forgive you everything, so long as you still think of me with love. I *could* wish that you would write oftener and not hesitate to trust me with your full confidence. I do not think you will ever have cause to reproach me or yourself that you deemed me worthy to receive the promptings of your heart, for, darling, however freely and lavishly you bless me with the utterances of confidence and love, your love *cannot* be greater than mine. Believe me, dearest Lottie ,that until love can betray love, your prayer and wish will be answered. But, I do not wish you to write to me oftener than you have convenient time, and what is far more, *inclination*. Whatever may be my desires, I seldom allow them to influence me in my duty. That is, though loving you as I do, and anxious to hear frequently from you if only by a line, still, if I am disappointed, outwardly I bear my disappointment as philosophically as possible. It has been a difficult task, dear Lottie, to school, in any degree, my naturally demonstrative nature, but I hope I have succeeded somewhat.

I did not intend writing so much when I sat down. But for some reason I hardly know what, I exer-

cise no judgment when you are to peruse my written thoughts. You will overlook my fault, for you are the cause of my sinning. And then it is delightful to know that I can write just as I think, knowing that there is one who will read with interest and answer in terms that fill my whole being with grateful pleasure.

How, dearest Lottie, shall I thank you for the precious tokens of love you send me in your letter. I could almost wish that the days would be but minutes that every moment I might receive a kiss from you! I can almost imagine that I hear you say, "Good night, dear 'Cham,' a kiss and pleasant dreams." But, poor me! I can only *return* them ten-fold, and wish that I might, indeed, sink into slumber with the pleasant conviction that Lottie's *self* had left the imprint of her love upon me.

Dear Lottie, *must* I wait so long again ere I hear from you? Do not put my patience to the test too often!

I kiss you good-bye, aye, more than *one* kiss.

Sincerely your lover ever,

CHALMERS

P.S. Please excuse the appearance of my paper. My stationery is all soiled and I have not yet been able to replenish my portfolio with good. Swimming the Rappahannock and drenching rains do not improve writing paper materially.

Permit me to kiss you once more ere I say adieu.

"CHAM"

IN CAMP NEAR KELLEY'S FORD, VA.
AUGUST 12th, 1863

DEAREST LOTTIE:

Your gentle "reminder" of the almost cruel neglect of which I have been guilty toward you was received last evening, arousing me from the apathy into which I had unconsciously fallen, by realizing that though war has its "charms," *love* has its duties that should be paramount to every blandishment. Since writing you last I have not touched pen for purposes of correspondence except to write two letters to my mother and sisters, to inform them that they need not yet acquaint themselves with the latest mourning fashions. During the Maryland and Pennsylvania campaign there was no time for epistolary purposes, save for those who upon the smallest incident build Munchausenish adventures that the fools at home may gape over, and for those who sign themselves "My pen is poor my ink is *pail,* my love for you will never fail. Yourn til death. Nebudchadnezzar." I must have time to think, when I write, — and I never wish to receive letters that do not bear the impress of thought, or of care. I can offer no reasonable excuse, dearest friend,

for my long silence, nothing, save the occupation of my time by the duties of the campaign to the exclusion of all affairs of a private nature. Forgive me, Lottie darling, all the moments of uneasiness I have caused you, remembering that it was not through forgetfulness but want of time. Shall I tell you what I thought occasionally, as mail after mail arrived and I did not receive any letter from you? "I wish Lottie *would* write, not wait for me. She *ought* to remember that she has more time than I now-a-days, but, *perhaps,* she is not willing to write letters without hope of answers." You were not forgotten! No, indeed! You haunted me everywhere, and at times I prayed that Lee would be able to extend his march into New York, that I might have the pleasure of visiting you — The Northern campaign should have been prolonged, at least, that is the opinion entertained by many in the army, for then the men would have been recompensed in a measure for the hardships they have endured by the smiles of the fair damsels of the land and the good things of the table — Queer, isn't it, that the citizens of a State should be extortionists of the "first water," — should swindle the very men who come to save them from ruin and their country from desolation: I "spose it's human nature," but I know that it would be *my* nature to decorate these gentlemen with a *vegetable* necktie — Do you know, Lottie *mine,* that the ladies have no greater rivals in the eyes of a soldier than a well spread table. You must not expect to carry on a successful rivalry with it, when we return from the war, until several days have elapsed, then, however, you will re-

sume your unapproachable position, and from your sublime heights you can afford to smile magnanimously down upon the "poor devil" of a rival that had the audacity to cross your pathway —

One of these days, perhaps I shall be able to narrate the adventures of the "First Brigade" during the spring and summer campaign, and more particularly the incidents in the life of a very humble member thereof, "meaning me." Beverly, Aldie, Upperville, Gettysburg, Williamsport, Boonsboro, Falling Waters, Chester Gap, and Culpepper, have all been made historic by the "First." Our Brigade numbers now about half that it did before the Beverly fight. At Gettysburg alone it lost nearly two hundred.

The "heated term" has been upon us for about two weeks. No words can tell how anxiously we look for the time when it will be *off,* for it is too hot for white people. Shade commands as high a premium here as does gold in the capital of the Confederacy, and drinkable water is priceless — The evenings are delightful, — just such lovely evenings, dearest, that I hope you and I may spend together, "when this cruel war is over," — such evenings that entrance the hardened sentiments, making them for the time, subject to the heart. Sometimes I think, dear one, that if I could have you near me, — very near me, — that even a whisper would not pass unheard nor the slightest breath go unfelt, — if this could be so I should be perfectly happy. How we long for what we have not! How we sigh for the presence of a loved one, and in the dreams of our "waking hours" do we pass endless ages

of bliss and happiness. Ah, Lottie, you are the object of many thoughts, the "Unseen" but yet the *Loved.* The romance of our acquaintance strengthens our love, for we are ignorant of defects, and when we *are* acquainted I trust our friendship will fail to notice them — Isn't it almost a mockery to send a *kiss* in a *letter?* It is aggravating to say the least. You "kiss me goodnight." This is what I read in your letter lying before me. And that is all. I do not feel the contact of your lips with mine, nor your warm breath mingling with mine; I do not feel the loving pressure of your arms, nor the beating of your heart against one whose every thought is yours, and every sentiment of love engrossed by you. None of this; naught but the cold formal words. How little it satisfies a nature like mine. Are you content with mere words? I hope not. I would not have you differ from me in this. I am not devoid of the passion that enriches humanity and gives love a brighter glow and a blissful reality — Tell me, dearest, that you are like me — that your heart sighs for the real — that you look forward to the future when all of our promises shall be fulfilled, — when we will love each other not only in *word* but in *deed.* It is this, darling, that makes this present life endurable to me, — the knowledge that in your love I shall find peace and happiness. Am I too sanguine? Am I deceiving myself with an *idea.* Do I ask more than you can give? or do *I offer you more than you care to receive?* Rather a thousand times would I that you should declare that the novel manner of our acquaintance had enticed you into expressions of feeling not real than that you should give me but a portion

of your affections. The world is practical enough, — too much so, — for in its general intercourse with society, — the romance of life is too often frowned down and ridiculed, the tenderer sentiments are the sport of wits, and the subject of jest for fools. You and I, dear, must have a world of our own, *within* the world of society — a world sacred to ourselves, a "Paradise" that none can enter ——— I believe I am running wild, but it has been so long since I wrote you that I hardly know when to "halt."

In the note before me, you say "you do not know how it will be received." Shall I tell you? As the parched earth the descending rain; as the bird receives the returning sunbeam; as the starving receive rescuing food, and last as the *lover* receives the long delayed missive of his mistress. Do you doubt the reception of any of your letters? Surely you do not, or ought not, — or else dear Lottie, you place little confidence in my assurances. I know my long silence excuses you for doubting me, but hereafter you will have no occasion to doubt me for that. —

What do you do with yourself this terrible weather — Where do you go to escape the effects of this summer heat? The furnace into which Shadrach & Co. were thrown must have received its seventh "heat" from the fragment of some such summer as this. Here with us where the temperature and weather is "salubrious" only to the Hottentot, our costume would make comfortable an Esquimaux during his six months of fish-oil and torpidity. *Years* ago, summer concerts were in vogue, the fan trade brisk, and lemonades

palatable, to say nothing of cobblers and juleps; ladies in pink, ladies in blue, and ever so many of 'em in white were visible; gay rides in the evening and gayer "meet me by moonlight alones" were numerous, and what a beautiful bouquet, radiant with brilliant colors was the audience at the popular church of a Sunday forenoon, with the many hued fans fluttering like so many butterflies hovering about! It is the same now is it not? — Wherever you go and whatever you may do, please don't forget that "Cham" is sweltering and broiling good-naturedly on the banks of the Rappahannock River, and composedly repeating that "all's well that ends well" —

Lottie darling, I have written enough to satisfy even you. — You will forgive my past remissness will you not, for you know it is written "to err is human, to forgive divine." You will not have cause for complaint again. Will you answer as promptly as I have; let the speedy reception of a letter from *my* Lottie be the harbinger of your complete forgiveness. Please let it be so, and I will shower kisses upon you until you are repaid.

I embrace and kiss you a thousand times, and assure you, dearest, of the unalterable love of

Your CHALMERS

P.S. George is well; wishes to be remembered as usual, thinks of going home — when his time is up!

"CHAM"

At this point in the correspondence of "The Unknown Friends," it will be noted that there was a long lapse of time before my father's concluding note of January 25th, 1864. It has always seemed to me that

POST OFFICE, FREEPORT, ILLINOIS
JANUARY 25th, 1864

FRIEND LOTTIE:

I propose visiting the East within the next three weeks, and feel a great desire to have your permission to call upon you. If you are willing the "Unknown Friends" should lose their peculiar title, please be so kind as to write me immediately. There's a great "Mystery" to be solved. Lottie friend, shall we shrink from it? My address is as above.

Please accept assurances of my high esteem.

As *ever,*

CHALMERS

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when my mother received my father's letter of August 12th, 1863, her conscience inherited from a long line of Quaker ancestors, asserted itself and would not allow her to answer the letter.

C. I. M.

MARRIED

In Williamsville, N. Y., Sept. 12th, at the residence of the bride's father, by the Rev. J. Hazard Hartzell, of Buffalo, Mr. CHALMERS INGERSOLL, of Greenfield, Mass., and Miss LOTTIE B. RINEWALT, of Williamsville.

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